

Elementary English

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DETROIT
DEMOCRACY IN READING



INDEPENDENCE IN READING



POETRY FOR CHILDREN



**NEWSPAPERS AND
RECORDINGS**



**READINESS IN VOCABULARY
AND SPELLING**

Elementary ENGLISH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MARCH, 1950

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 145 | Caste System or Democracy? ALVINA TREUT BURROWS |
| 149 | Developing Independent Readers ELIZABETH M. JENKINS |
| 155 | Poetry for Children LELAND B. JACOBS |
| 158 | Using Newspapers JOHN J. DEBOER |
| 171 | Recorded Sound Aids PAT KILLGALLON |
| 182 | Vocabulary Readiness ETHEL MABIE FALK |
| 189 | Readiness for Spelling HENRY D. RINSLAND |
| 192 | Look and Listen |
| 197 | The Educational Scene |
| 201 | Review and Criticism |

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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No. 3

Caste System Or Democracy in Teaching Reading?

ALVINA TREUT BURROWS¹

No democratic minded person in our society defends the caste system. Yet in our schools we are still operating such a system. In thousands of classrooms across the country children of poor reading performance live under a stigma quite akin to that of being an Untouchable. Even when a poor group is labelled the "Brownies" or the "Chipmunks" no one is fooled. Nor do the average or good readers fare much better. For though the onus is less if one belongs to a middle or superior group the satisfactions are often as limited. Prescribed reading, excessive directions, reading to answer someone else's questions about material one doesn't care about in the first place can scarcely be a challenging experience to children of any level of reading power. Nor does the questionable satisfaction of belonging to a "better" group build the democratic attitudes we profess to esteem. The snobbery engendered in children and very often in their parents is, indeed, sad. And all too often the academic little souls who rate the exalted position of being in the "best" group are those children who most need other emphases and other kinds of satisfaction. High caste or low, in reading this anti-social situation is also anti-satisfying for

both children and teacher.

The Regimented Program

In learning to read, as in any other living activity, the nucleus of a dynamic group is that of common purpose or common interest. And it has been demonstrated enough times that similar scores on reading tests do not automatically spell out such common purposes or common interests. One has only to note in such a regimen the amount of teacher effort devoted to holding children's attention, to trying to force children to keep the place, or to disciplining the group while one child recites, to know that something is seriously wrong. What is wrong, or at least one thing that is wrong with such an organization, is that the groups are not groups in any real sense. Their individual interests in general and consequently their interests in reading are just as diverse as though their test scores were miles apart. Another thing that is wrong with this three level plan is that the nature of the reading process itself is violated. No matter how social the ends or aims of any reading experience may be it is still an individual process. Individual tempo, individual

¹Instructor, School of Education, New York University.

rhythms of work, and individual thinking are still in action. To try to make a group of children "keep together" in reading a selection is a frustrating experience. When this is done day after day it is not surprising that many children hate reading.

Meeting Individual Needs

Better ways of meeting children's needs in reading are being used in our forward moving schools. Many teachers have already arrived at a thorough-going individual program in reading with only those group activities in reading which are of necessity social activities. Dramatizing a beloved story needs group planning. Meeting with others who have read an informational article and who need to clarify their findings for a group exhibit or report is a normal, social use of reading. Practicing the serial reading of some gripping story may be another. There are, of course, many more. These group experiences which can not be achieved by individuals working alone beget a very different sort of group amalgamation than the test determined grouping which is likely to beget only resentment.

The transition from patterns of work long accepted by parents or administrators to a more individually focused regimen must of course be a gradual one. Months or even a year may be necessary to substitute new habits and new attitudes for old ones. And in the transition at least two important considerations must obtain. A number of books, texts, and magazines must be made accessible to provide for the variety of content interests and the range of reading ability to be found in any group of children past the first threshold of reading. Secondly, the teacher must respect

children's choices of reading material for a large part of their reading experience if she hopes that they will respect her choices, her suggestions or assignments. In making the change from the strictly directed reading assigned to one of the so-called ability groups a teacher may use several techniques of transition. Perhaps one period a week may be set aside for those who want to read a book of their own choice while others do some fairly quiet job or assigned reading. Sometimes a beginning is made by excusing from "group" reading a few children who are reading books they are eager to finish. More and more exceptions can be made until a considerable nucleus of interested readers can carry on with a minimum of teacher direction. Enthusiastic chatting about stories by those who are enjoying books or swapping accounts of exciting adventures intrigues others to try reading for themselves. Self direction can thus be fostered in reading while one or two days a week are still used for the old three group plan one hopes soon to lay aside. Children and teacher grow into something better while outgrowing an undemocratic and unproductive regimen.

Making the Transition

One teacher,² eager to move over into individual reading, made a successful transition through setting up six groups in her fifth grade class of twenty-two. With so many groups of twos, threes, or fours in the room, clear-cut ability lines were easily lost. Each group selected its own story for the day and decided what por-

²Marjorie D. Griffin, Southampton Elementary School, Southampton, Long Island, New York, Mr. Raymond Ortz, Principal.

tions were to be read aloud by each and who was to report to the class and how. The teacher spent some time with each group helping with word analysis where needed, and participating in group discussion. One group needed much help, others considerably less. At the end of forty-five minutes each group had one member report to the class. One day a week members of a group reported on some reading they had done which was related to one of the major content studies the class was engaged in. A daily period was also devoted to word study. Some of the words offering difficulty in the reading period were analysed as to structure and extended or clarified as to meaning. Dictionary and usage exercises were tied in with this analysis. One completely free period of silent reading was planned for Friday afternoons, a likely time for individual selection for weekend reading. A classroom library became an important center of the reading program.

The delight the children found in these varied reading activities was as great as was their progress. Nor is this parallel a paradox! Mrs. Griffin's reports upon the personal growth of her charges are as important as the reports of test measured reading growth. Only a few of her anecdotal recordings can be sampled here:

Chuck, who (had) great difficulty pronouncing words came upon the word "boulevard". He looked expectantly at the teacher—then sounded the word out, and pronounced it correctly. A member of his reading group said, "You see, Chuck, you can do it if you try". Chuck's shrug was accompanied by a real smile—. Since that time, he has no longer hesitated but plunged bravely into his reading and much of his bossiness and show-off attitude within the group has disappeared—.

Of another child Mrs. Griffin reports thus:

Gary, whose reading level has been at the middle of the third grade, read orally to the class the entire first page of the fifth grade *Weekly Reader* without a single error or hesitation. Every member of the class seemed to be holding his breath for Gary's triumph. The class was as thrilled as he was. "You said I could do it, and I did," said Gary,—who had come to this class only a few weeks ago. Since comprehension and oral interpretation of the printed words have improved, Gary's baby ways to gain attention have ceased and the class has welcomed him as a real friend.

Of still another Mrs. Griffin recorded,

Albert (had) excellent grades in science and arithmetic but very poor grades in social studies and reading. The test revealed that he was reading only at the fourth grade level. He "hated" reading; avoided taking a book from the library whenever possible. Recently his group was reading *The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. The reading period was over before the group finished the story. At the close of school Albert remained a half hour—to complete the story of his own volition. As he left he said, "Boy, that was a good story." His latest test indicated that he made more than a year's progress in the six weeks period.

It is regrettable that records of all twenty two children's personal satisfaction can not be detailed here. The quest for baseball yarns to satisfy William netted deep absorption not only for him but for half the class as well. And in *April* one lad wanted to read *The Night Before Christmas* because he said he'd heard about it! This youngster, a "poor" reader from an underprivileged home, evidenced such sensitivity and joy in the rhythm and imagery of that immortal bit of verse that one must wonder at the significance of so-called reading levels!

Test records of progress resulting from such wholehearted endeavor are gratifying but not surprising to observers who have seen children become intensely absorbed in their work. In a six week trial period the smallest gain made was two months, the largest gain was three years.³ The class median went up thirteen points—a full year's increase. There is ample evidence from test scores as well as from pupil behavior that a six week trial of individual and small group activities based upon children's interests and choices has borne abundant fruit.

Developing Workable Techniques

Questions of technique often arise among teachers who are eager to make school reading the integral part of children's lives it deserves to be. The matter of time is always annoying, no matter how sound the educational procedure. Teachers need to recall that one does not *have* to work individually with every child every day. Some children may need day-to-day follow-up for two or three days and then a chance to read whatever they can in whatever way they can for a few more days. Able children often profit from one conference with the teacher in a week or even two weeks. The teacher need not—indeed, can not—check on everything a child reads. It is far more important to stimulate his interests, to develop his habits and skills of independence through sensible word study, and to exercise his judgment and discrimination through effective class discussion and thoughtful individual conferences. In a dynamic program there is so much happening and so many avenues of teacher-pupil contact that the exact number of conferences between individual child and teacher is not

the most significant thing.

Some teachers who have long been experimenting with ways of dealing effectively with individuals in class situations of average size have found many helpful techniques. One⁴ has found in planning time for individual conferences in any one period that it smooths out uncertainties to list names or initials on the board. Children come to her in that order and no one needs to wait and wonder. Nor do the children need to be interrupted while they are reading to determine who is to come next. Another teacher⁵ finds that her first graders like her to sit in the middle of the room. The teacher is thus about equally close to all the young workers. Often such proximity is itself a spur to closer attention. Other teachers find ways of combining quiet group and individual activities with reading conferences in a so-called "Reading Workshop Period." While these are mere practical arrangements, sometimes mechanical details such as these help teachers and pupils to work with a minimum of interruption.

In seeking ways to bring school reading close to children's individual interests, in seeking ways to help children work successfully with others who have similar interests, teachers are working for the optimum in reading growth. They are achiev-

³New York State Reading Progress Test, For Grades 4 through 6, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Division of Examinations and Testing, Forms Y and Z, 1940, 1942, Albany, New York.

⁴Miss June D. Ferebee, Elementary School, Bronxville, N. Y.

Miss Julia A. Markham, principal.

⁵Miss Marjorie Tibbo, Plandome Road School, Manhasset, Long Island, New York.

Dr. Arthur Hamalainen, principal.

(Continued on Page 157)

Developing Independent Readers in the First Grade

ELIZABETH M. JENKINS¹

An actor once said that it was his extraordinary pleasure in the stage that caused his audiences to delight in it, too. "Real joy," he explained, "is bound to be contagious."

I can appreciate the actor's feeling toward his art because I feel the same way about teaching. I know it is my joy in the class-room that makes the children so enthusiastic about learning.

While teaching has always seemed to be more fun than work, my last year's class thrilled me even more than usually. The ease with which they learned to read, their love of literature, their improvement in speech, and the fun they had in learning had not been excelled by any group of beginners I had ever taught.

Gaining Reading Maturity

There were forty-two of them, six years of age when they entered school in September. None of them, of course, knew anything about reading. But by June they had become independent readers. They mastered the reading vocabulary during their first year in school, a standard seldom reached by children before the third or fourth grade. They read entirely on their own anything and everything whose content they were capable of understanding. They read not only the school readers for their age and grade, but many of their older brother's and sister's books as well. By the end of the year, they had at least fifty library books to their credit,

and many of them had read as many as a hundred, most of them of their own choosing. They consulted the encyclopedia when they wanted to prove, for example, that the spider was not, as George had said, a true insect. They read the school news in the daily paper as fluently as father would have read it, and perhaps a bit more interestingly. Nothing was too hard for these little beginners to tackle, no words were too difficult for them to unlock.

The verses in *Small Rain* by Elizabeth Orton Jones served as stepping stones to the Bible. One by one the children brought their own Bibles to school and took turns in reading the Psalms to their classmates. In preparation for their Christmas program they decided first to read, and then to commit to memory the Christmas story, as recorded in the Gospel of St. Luke.

A recording of *The King's Breakfast* led to the discovery of A. A. Milne's book *When We Were Very Young*. From here it was an easy step to *Now We Are Six* by the same author. Then came *Winnie The Pooh* and *The House At Pooh Corner* also by A. A. Milne, both of which were read by the children entirely on their

¹Supervisor, State Teachers College, Millersville, Pennsylvania. Miss Jenkins says she does not wish to imply that all children should necessarily learn to read by the end of the first grade. This article describes a happy combination of the child development approach with systematic assistance in the learning of reading skills.

own power, and by many of them at sight!

It was most rewarding to hear the children quote or refer to an expression from one of their classics. Once after having misspelled a simple word in a story he was writing, Joseph suddenly exclaimed, "I must be a bear of little brain" (from Winnie the Pooh). On another occasion Willy reminded his classmates to "stir their stumps" (referring to the same book).

After having read *Johnny Crow's Garden* by Leslie Brooke, Mildred had occasion to compare herself with the elephant who had said, "something quite irrelevant" in *Johnny Crow's Garden*. And once after a visitor had thanked us for a good time, George reminded us, "each visitor's attitude was the very best way of expressing his gratitude," quoting from *Johnny Crow's Party*, also by Leslie Brooke.

"I read the book so many times," George added, "that I know a lot of it by heart now."

After having enjoyed Wanda Gag's *Millions of Cats*, the children returned from the library with *Snippy and Snappy* and the ABC BUNNY. "Here are two more books," they exclaimed, "by the very same author!" Then one day John came to school with *gone is gone*. "This is an awfully good story," he told the class. "And it's by Wanda Gag, too. You ought to read it." And before school was dismissed that evening Liesi and her somewhat ease-loving husband Fritzl, their little Kinndli, and their mischievous dog, Spitz, had not only given us all a great deal

of pleasure, but enriched our own experiences as well.

It was a memorable morning when for the first time the children came to school a half hour early, in order to have that much more time to read. Each with his favorite book before him was seated at his desk, at the reading table, or secluded in a corner, where the slightest interruption would have seemed a sacrilege.

Jane was entertaining her little group of listeners with *Olaf of Orchard Farm*. Joseph was busy with his book on insects. Billy was having a wonderful time finding out what he wanted to know about bees. And Danny was enjoying his favorite school reader.

"Look at this," he pointed out, "the author of this book must think I can't read, because it says here, 'Ask your teacher to read the poems to you.' And I can read all the poems by myself. I don't need anybody to help me."

Angus and The Ducks, Angus Lost, Ask Mr. Bear, The Boats On The River, What To Do About Molly, and The Restless Robin by Marjorie Flack; *The Story of Ferdinand The Bull and Robert Francis Weatherbee* by Munroe Leaf; *Peter and The Frog's Eye* by Julius King; *Epaminondas* by Sara Cone Bryant; *Hansel and Gretel; Twas The Night Before Christmas* by Clement Moore; and the riches of nursery lore, all were being enjoyed for the love of reading.

Learning to Read When Ready

To be sure, these little first graders were not taught to read immediately upon entering school in September. One

group did not begin reading until late in January. The children's first experiences were in readiness for reading; in learning to speak more distinctly; in getting more things in mind to talk about; and more words with which to express their ideas. They learned to think, to organize their ideas, and to express them clearly before they even tried to learn to read. Since understanding is the alpha and omega of all reading it was important that the little beginners should learn to organize and express their thoughts before being confronted with someone else's ideas. For it is with his own mind and experiences, and not with those of the author, that the pupil learns to read.

So while the children were getting ready for reading, I read to them every day without fail.

If only the mothers in their eagerness to prepare the children for school would read to them, share with them as delightfully as they can, some of the most beautiful poems and stories for children! What a help that would be to their teacher! It has long been known that the more stories the children have learned, the greater their interest in books, the richer their experiences, and the deeper their understanding, the more easily and happily they will learn to read.

So even before the children could read a word themselves, we shared together the delights to be had from books. What I read, and when it was read was often determined by what had happened in the classroom.

Their confusion, one day, in trying to carry out a series of simple directions,

prepared the way for *Epaminondas*. The story was so enthusiastically received that I had to read it through three times before I dared to lay it down. And by that time the little blumberbus who hadn't "the sense he was born with" had endeared himself forever to my little brood. Then imagine their delight when later in the year, they were able to read every amusing event in the story, from beginning to end, and without anybody's help!

It was in connection with the children's discussion on the best ways of celebrating their birthdays that they were introduced to Pooh Bear, Piglet and Eeyore in *Winnie The Pooh*. "Piglet's plan for a birthday present gave me an idea for a nice gift," Billy informed us. "But I'm not going to tell what it is." So each new book made its own particular contribution to the children's getting ready to learn to read.

More than once, Rose Fyleman's fairies calmed and quieted the merry-makers when their enthusiasm had carried them out of all bounds. And often the children compared themselves to "Little Charlie Chipmunk" the chatterbox who monopolized the conversations.

So little by little, step by step, and day by day, the children were getting ready to learn to read. Through their experiences with the people and animals in their stories, their own lives had been greatly enriched. They had cultivated a taste for the best in children's literature. They had tasted the fun that books can give. They had learned that the "black marks on the white paper" have the most wonderful stories to tell, and they had learned to look

for the meaning behind the printed symbols. They had learned scores of new words and expressions because they liked them, and knew their meaning. They had enjoyed many new adventures they could not have had except from books. And best of all, they were now clamoring to learn to read.

So with the children in that glorious state of readiness, we went to work in earnest to learn to read. Their pre-primers were their very first school readers. But their experience charts, the daily news, the bulletin board, the schoolroom posters, and the storybooks on the reading table all teased the taste, and invited the children to read, read, read!

Learning to Recognize Words

The vocabularies in their pre-primers had given the children little or no difficulty. "But what about all our other books?" I asked. "Our experience charts, our posters, and all these beautiful storybooks? You will want to read them, too. But what will you do when you come to a big, hard word you have never seen before? You'll meet a lot of them, you know."

"We'll learn them!" the children told me.

"But instead of trying to memorize all the new words, suppose we learn to unlock them. Then you won't need to remember them. But in that case, we will have to learn *how to unlock* them, won't we? Are you ready to do that?"

Of course, they were! And they were now as eager to learn how to unlock a new word, as they had earlier been anxious to read.

So everyone who was able to read his pre-primers fluently and knew at least sixty words on sight was now taught the Cordts Key Word Method of unlocking new words. Then as soon as the rest were ready for the technique, they learned it, too. And we had as much fun learning how to unlock new words as we had reading from our books.

By the Key Word Technique, children learn to recognize a *new word* by its *known parts*. The parts, in turn, are learned from words that the children already knew from their reading. These words become their *key words*. The known parts in them are called *key parts*. And it is by recognizing and blending them that the children are able to unlock the new word.

Our first key word was *candy* and from it the children learned to pronounce the key part *ca*. They then recognized the same part in *caterpillar*, *camping*, *candles*, *cabbage*, *carrots*, *cantaloupe*, *cafeteria*, *camera*, *canteen*, *taxis*, *cabs*, *canvas tents*, *canned fruit*, *cannibals*, *calla lilies*, and in *camels*, *cattle*, *milk cans*, even *cackling hens*, the *Grand Canyon*, *Canada*, *camouflage* and *Canterbury bells*, and in every other word in which the unit is pronounced the same as in *candy*.

Another of our key words was *pitcher* from which we learned to pronounce *pi*. The children then recognized *pi* in *picking*, *pinching*, *cap pistol*, *piggy-wig*, *pillows*, *pictures*, *Pilgrims*, *pigeons*, *pitter-patter*, *caterpillars*, *pitching*, *picnic*, *dill pickles*, *sandpits*, *Pittsburgh*.

From the key word *bell* the children learned to pronounce their first consonant

ending *l*. Then by combining, for example, the two beginnings *ca* and *pi* with the ending *l* the children were able to recognize an entire syllable in *calendar*, *calla lilies*, *California*, *pillows*, *pillars*, *pillbox*, *Pilgrims*.

The first step, then, was to learn the *key part* from its *key word*. Next by combining a beginning and ending key part, the children were able to recognize a whole new syllable. And from here it was an easy step to the *whole word*.

So, day by day, the children learned to recognize new words by their known parts.

As each new key word was learned we added it, with its key part underscored, to the key word chart. And we kept the chart constantly before the children ready for reference. In case anyone had forgotten a key part, he needed only to refer to its key word on the chart, in order to recall it. Thus, the reader was able to help himself when confronted with a new word in his book.

Obviously, the more key parts the children learned, the more new words they were able to unlock. And when finally they had put their last key word to use, they had become independent readers.

However, long before the goal was reached the children refused to let anyone tell them a new word.

"Don't help me," was the usual plea. "I'll find a key word to help me."

It was early in November when Harry announced that he had just unlocked the word *caterpillar* in his science reader.

"The picture made me think it was just

a worm," Harry told us. "But when I saw the word I found out it was a caterpillar."

Did Harry know the word because he had seen it before? No, but he knew the *parts* in the word. He had previously learned them from the following key words:

| | | |
|-------|---------|------|
| candy | her | bell |
| sit | pitcher | |

Knowing the parts of the word, Harry needed only to combine them and lo! he knew the *whole word*, even though he had never seen it before!

"I didn't have to unlock all of it," Harry told us, "cause when I got as far as *caterpil* I knew what it was."

Not a day passed that someone didn't fairly shout his delight over having unlocked another new word in his reading.

Of course, the children did not have key words for every new word in the reading vocabulary. It would have been impractical, if not impossible, to teach the children all the key parts they would have needed. So as the final step in the Technique the children were taught the vowel sounds from their key words. And with this additional skill the littler learners were "foot loose and fancy free" to unlock every word that can be unlocked, which includes 86% of all the words in the entire reading vocabulary.

Indeed, it was not intended that these little children, many of them under seven years of age, should learn to recognize the vowels in words. It would have been soon enough for that in the second or third grade. Nor that they should read books years in advance of their grade! But when

once they had tasted the joy of unlocking new words, there was no stopping them until the course was completed.

Reading Many Books

The children read all the different sets of basal readers that we had. They read all the library books they could put their hands on. The choice of the book was never determined by how "hard" or how "easy" it was, but by the children's interests at the moment. The new words in the story were as easily identified as the old ones.

The climax came the day we had been to the puppet show for it was then that the children discovered that they could read Collodi's *Pinnochio*, entirely on their own. They unlocked every new expression in the story without anyone's help:

his impertinent nose
tremendous yawns
stamped his feet in desperation
recovering from his stupefaction
uninhabited country
intelligent and distinguished audience
Punchinello and Harlequin

When teasingly I asked, "How could you possibly know all those hard words?" I was told, "We don't have to know them. We unlock them when we come to them. That's easy."

But such skill in reading does not come by chance. No matter how crowded the curriculum was, or how full the day, what with polliwogs, the praying mantis, snakes, turtles, fish, measles, mumps and chicken-pox, or with organizing the ideas we had gained while at the circus, the puppet show, in the pet shop, and in the school

library, we never missed a key word lesson. We used no tricky devices or drill methods during these periods of creative learning. We allowed no artificial means to cloud the issue. We looked forward to each new lesson, and the added skill in reading it gave us. Had I wanted to, I could not have skipped even one day of constructive learning. The children would not have allowed it.

The daily lessons were equally effective in improving the children's speech. Long before school closed in June, the little lispers had acquired their s's. And a "wed wose" had become a "red rose," and the "itto boys" became "little" boys.

We were seldom without visitors, and whoever came to see us was sure to comment on the children's fine diction. Beginning as it did with the key word lessons, their clear and distinct enunciation finally carried over to all their oral activities; class discussions, reading, story-telling, dramatizations, choral speaking and singing.

It was some time in March when, one by one, the children discovered that they could spell. In Bobby's birthday message to an absent classmate, he had used the words *congratulate* and *celebrate*, and had spelled both correctly. "I spelled them," Bobby explained, the way I thought they ought to be, and then I unlocked them to see if I was right. And I was!"

Harriet, while recommending a book to the same child wanted to write the word *especially*. "I can spell the beginning," she told us, and I know the ending. But I'm not sure about the middle."

(Continued on Page 170)

Poetry For Children

LELAND B. JACOBS¹

There are those who believe that America is in danger of losing poetry in the daily living of the people of this country. These persons point to the technological society in which we live, the mass-communication techniques employed, and the many hours of activities outside the home as chief contributing factors to the fact that poetry plays, at best, a very insignificant role in the home living of the "typical" American family today.

There are those who say that the school has been instrumental in dampening children's interest in poetry. They point to "mass memorization," whereby forty fifth-grade children, one after another, stand before their peers and "wander lonely as a cloud" forty times around the room. Or, to comply with the teacher's assignment, thirty-five eleven-year-olds, over and over again, recite their way "into the valley of death" with "the six hundred."

Those who say that the school has been a party to discouraging children's love of poetry point also to "verse vivisection" techniques employed by teachers. Such techniques include scanning the lines, working out the "a, b, c's" of the rhyme schemes, looking up in dictionaries the new words, and searching out the similes and metaphors, to the end that the poetry is gone - has been worried away - and what remains is an emaciated skeleton of rhythms, rhymes, new or unusual words, and figures of speech.

Those who contend that the school has helped to turn children away from poetry further point to "poetic preaching" as a technique employed to dull the desire for more experiences with poetry. Children of elementary-school age are, indeed, skeptical of verbal ethical preachers which they do not comprehend. Their ethics emerge from the quality of human relationships which they experience in their daily living. They are not drawn to poetry by such adult exhortations as:

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh as boyhood can!
Build today, then, strong and sure;
With a firm and ample base;
And, ascending and secure,
Shall tomorrow find its place."

There are those who believe that the school can give poetry back to American children. Teachers can give poetry back to children by eliminating the practices that drive children in some opposite direction. Moreover, teachers can create a school environment in which poetry has significance in the daily living and learning together, and this is chiefly achieved by reading, reading, and reading poetry with boys and girls - poetry that is a joyful experience in group living. Of course, the

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poetry that the teacher reads, and reads, and reads to the children must be good poetry. And what is good poetry for children? Walter Barnes answered this question refreshingly when he wrote, some years ago, that "Good poetry for children is good poetry that is good for children."

When selecting poetry to read, there are several guides to "good poetry that is good for children" which the teacher can use to locate the poems appropriate to the maturity and interests of his group. These guides are time-tested; they are almost certain to induce the "read it again" effect.

In the first place, children enjoy poetry that produces an exhilarating sense of melodious movement. The elementary-school child is necessarily active. He needs activity not only in the physical sense, but he also understands and enjoys vicariously that which helps him to experience with his total being. Walter De La Mare has called this the "tune and runningness" of the poem. From such nursery rhymes as "Hi Diddle Diddle," "The Grand Old Duke of York" and "Jack and Jill" on, poetry that creates a joyous feeling of moving, doing, acting appeals to the dynamic, healthful zest for living which the elementary-school child displays. A. A. Milne's "Hoppity," Elizabeth Madox Roberts' "The Woodpecker," Eleanor Farjeon's "Mrs. Peck Pigeon," John Masefield's "Sea Fever" are examples of this exhilarating movement in poetry.

In the second place, children like poetry that makes the commonplace, work-a-day experiences of life vibrant. The child is a "here and now" child. He knows what

he lives; he interprets new ideas in terms of what he senses and feels and thus knows. He is a realist and a philosopher; he seeks to create new meanings out of ordinary, every-day happenings that affect him developmentally as a person. The weather, animals, pets, toys, holidays, pastimes, wearing apparel, relatives, people in the community, modes of transportation: all these and many other similar experiences in living, when presented with authenticity, validity, and originality in poetry, delight children. Such poems must, however, raise the experience to the level that Sara Teasdale suggested when she wrote:

Life has loveliness to sell,
All beautiful and splendid things.

In the third place, children like poetry that tells wonderful stories. Narrative has delighted the child-like mind down through the ages. The modern child's request, "Tell me a story," can be met in poetry as well as in prose. Such perennial favorites as Clement Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas," Robert Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin," James Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphant Annie," A. A. Milne's "The King's Breakfast," Dorothy Aldis's "Hiding," and the Benets' *Book of Americans* testify eloquently to children's love of story-telling poems. When the narrative poem is primarily a top-notch story, genuinely and simply developed and told with integrity, children respond enthusiastically. They frequently even do as Sir Walter Scott tells that he did, "I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

In the fourth place, children enjoy poetry that brings health-giving laughter. The spontaneous laughter of children—

their love of humor which, of course, changes from maturation level to new maturation level—gives the teacher this clue. Release from tension, momentary relief from staid reason children prize, recognize as healthful. Sheer perception of funny people, funny situations, funny words, funny sounds, and the like, are of the essence of childhood. When they discover these in poetry, they respond spontaneously. Vachel Lindsay's "The Turtle," Edward Lear's "The Owl and the Pussy Cat," A. A. Milne's "Disobedience," Florence Jacques' "The Puffin," T. A. Daly's "Between Two Loves" are but a few familiar examples of poetry that tickles the verbal funny-bones of elementary-school children. Milton could well have had boys and girls in mind when he pictured "Laughter, holding both his sides," for this is what children cherish in humorous poetry.

Even with any or all of the appeals just suggested, poetry to be the kind that children ask to hear over and over again must, above all, sing its way into their memories. "Lyric quality" is an elusive term, but that is what "a singing poem" seems to mean to elementary-school children. The ideas and the words and rhythms that are used to express the ideas must be

so harmoniously welded that the children "just know the poem" from hearing it read — at their request — many, many times. May Hill Arbuthnot says it this way: "A child does not know consciously that he likes the sound or pattern of a poem until he has heard it often enough for it to be tucked away in his mind, as a whole or even in bits. Then, as he says those singing words over to himself, he begins to understand them. He re-creates them as he says them, and they are really his."²

The modern teacher makes poetry a highlight of school experience for the children whom he teaches. He reads them poetry throughout the school year—not only at holiday times or on special occasions. He catches the mood of the moment. He relates poetry to the on-going experiences of the day. He makes poetry so joyful that if, by chance, some time elapses without poetry being read, the children request it. As Max Eastman writes in *The Enjoyment of Poetry*, "This is the priesthood of art. not to bestow upon the universe a new aspect, but upon the beholder a new enthusiasm."³

²May Hill Arbuthnot, *Children and Books*, p. 133.

³Max Eastman, *The Enjoyment of Poetry*, p. 97.

CASTE SYSTEM OR DEMOCRACY?

(Continued from Page 148)

ing not only growth in reading behavior but a warming measure of growth in the larger behavior of which language behavior is a significant part. And they are

closing a breach in our democratic philosophy which dares not tolerate a caste system in any segment of its educational program.

Using Modern Channels of Communication: Newspapers

JOHN J. DEBOER*

In spite of the rapid development of other means of communication, the newspaper remains the people's chief source of information regarding current affairs. According to Lazarsfeld,¹ neither the weekly newsmagazine nor the radio newscast has reduced the total amount of newspaper reading. The 334 morning newspapers in the United States aggregate a total circulation of 20,545,908; the 1,429 evening newspapers account for a circulation of 50,927,505; and the 497 Sunday newspapers are bought by 43,665,364 people. Many copies of the newspaper are, of course, read by more than one person. Clearly the intelligent reading of the newspaper continues to be a primary objective of the schools.

The problem is not merely one of creating the ability to comprehend what is in the newspapers and to utilize their numerous and excellent services, but of developing independent judgment with respect to biases present in the news and editorial columns of the newspaper. Roughly 85 percent of American towns have but one newspaper.² Of the 1,750 daily newspapers in the United States, 375 are owned by a few large chains controlling more than one fourth of our total daily circulation.³ The growth of the great news services and syndicates, which have enabled American journalism to

¹"The Daily Newspaper and Its Competitors," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January, 1942, p. 219.

²"One Newspaper Towns in the U. S., 1910-1940," *N. E. A. Journal XXXVI* (February, 1947) 118.

³R. K. Eichelberger, "Freedom to be Well Informed," *Senior Scholastic* (Teachers Edition) LI (October 27, 1947) 22-3.

match the efficiency of our other mass production industries, has at the same time created the danger of monopoly in the realm of ideas. The need for critical reading abilities is therefore more acute today than in any previous period in our history. Examples of distortion and suppression of the news in favor of the economic and political interests of the publishers (real or imagined) could be enumerated at length. Inasmuch as the viewpoints advanced in the daily press are frequently supported by propaganda materials distributed in large quantities to the schools, the need for providing a balance of opinions in the reading matter available to children and youth becomes apparent.

The Newspaper Reading Interests of Children and Youth

The newspaper reading interests of elementary school children. The great majority of studies dealing with newspaper reading have been conducted at the high school level. It would be wrong to assume, however, that elementary school pupils are not interested in newspapers, or that their interest is confined to the comic strip. Anderson (1), Davis (29), and Lazar (56) found that both boys and girls in the elementary school devote a considerable amount of time to the reading of newspapers. Johnson (54) found that children read books in greater quantity than adults, and that both adults and children read newspapers about thirty five minutes daily. If the time spent in listening to the radio (generally estimated at two and one-half to three hours daily), the time spent at the

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movies (about three hours per week), and the time spent in reading magazines, estimated by H. R. Anderson (2) at two to three hours daily is added to this figure, it becomes apparent that children spend at least as much time with the mass media of communication as they spend in school. It is clear that the school cannot afford to ignore the educational effects of these communication media.

While Comic strips lead in popularity among the various features of the newspaper, general news, sports, and local news appear prominently among the sections which elementary school pupils read. The Comic section, according to Witty (95), is very popular among children. The average number of Comic strips read regularly by the groups in his study was twenty-one. The studies of newspaper reading by children of elementary school age that have been reported are extremely limited in number. Further research in this area is urgently needed.

The newspaper reading interests of high school youth. A very large number of investigations have been made in the field of high school students' interests in newspaper reading. Such studies as have been made of the time devoted to newspaper reading by high school students suggest that young people generally read newspapers from 15 to 35 minutes daily (2, 12, 29, 35, 43, and 54), and that adults spent 35-60 or more minutes daily in the reading of the newspaper (70, 54, and 94). Comic strips lead all features of the newspaper in popularity, according to most of the studies, with sports and general news (foreign and national) following closely (2, 12, 14 and 20). Boys, of course, give high priority to sports news, girls to fashion news (35, 74, 76, 27). Front page news, as opposed to news stories on the inside pages, achieved high rank among the sections of the newspaper most widely read by both boys and girls in high school and by adults (20, 35, 37, 99 and 27). Local news likewise commanded great popularity (1, 2, 41, 74, 76, 99).

One investigator (25) observes that students tend, after graduation, to drift into indifference and apathy with regard to current affairs. He attributes this fact to a number of factors: (1) unfamiliarity with newspaper vocabulary (72 percent of more than 500 students did not know that "probe" means "investigation"); (2) inability to distinguish between news stories and editorials; (3) inability to detect instances of journalistic license, embodied in such over-used expressions as, "it has been reported, alleged, or surmised"; (4) inability to discover discrepancies when newspaper stories flatly contradict their headlines, and (5) inability to distinguish between desirable and undesirable newspapers. This investigator recommends that schools give systematic instruction in critical thinking, in the meaning of newspaper jargon, and in the development of criteria for evaluating newspapers.

Harvey and Denton (43) found that from 70 to 90 percent of high school students generally believe what they read in the newspapers, but that when social science teachers stress intelligent newspaper reading the percentage falls as low as 24. Seward and Silvers (77) found that during wartime, readers tend to believe reports issued by their government rather than those issued by the enemy, and that they are more likely to believe war news favorable to their own side rather than that which is favorable to the enemy. One may assume that in peacetime, readers in any country are more likely to accept their own government's version of an international dispute rather than that of an opposing country. Harvey and Denton found further that readers have a tendency to believe good news rather than bad news, and to believe news adverse to its source rather than news favorable to its source. An obvious goal for instruction in newspaper reading would therefore seem to be the development of objectivity with respect to news reports from

sources involved in political or international controversy.

Newspaper Reading in the Schools

One study of school activities in promoting more intelligent reading of the newspaper (43) revealed that 29 of 41 schools addressed made efforts to provide guidance in the reading of newspapers, and that all of the schools believed that such efforts are desirable. Judging by the extensive bibliography of school units on newspapers, one may reasonably conclude that secondary schools, at least, are giving considerable attention to the problem of newspaper reading. Whether they are giving effective guidance, on a sufficiently large scale, is difficult to say. Little evidence has been reported on this question. The results, in terms of young people's reading interests in the field of the newspaper, would suggest that present efforts are insufficient (57) (60).

Objectives for the Teaching of the Newspaper

One of the clearest statements of desirable objectives in the improvement of young people's newspaper reading has been made by Dale (28). He asserts that intelligent study of a good newspaper can help us lead rich lives by (1) showing us what work in the world we can help do; (2) helping us to get the most for our money; (3) helping us to see the crime problem clearly; (4) helping us to have a good time on a small income; and (5) helping us to make up our own minds. In another place (27), Dale lists three objectives for the teacher of English in the development of discrimination in newspaper reading: (1) familiarizing boys and girls with the best examples of modern journalism; (2) helping boys and girls get a richer and much more comprehensive understanding of the role that the press might play in community life; and (3) developing the capacity for close, careful reading.

Three major categories of objectives emerge from the literature in this field. They are (1) the expansion of young people's interests in newspapers; (2) the development of an awareness of the major trends and events in current affairs; and (3) the development of powers of discrimination with respect to newspaper reading.

1. *The expansion of young people's interests in newspapers.* Newspapers at their best provide a variety of services which are not adequately utilized by young people, many of whom restrict their newspaper reading to the Comic strips, sports pages, and possibly the front page headlines. By availing themselves of other parts of the daily newspaper, young people can find amusement and entertainment, information concerning present hobbies and suggestions for new ones, guidance in the selection of motion pictures and radio programs, business and vocational information, and many other kinds of aid. In many instances young people need merely to be introduced to newspaper features to start them on the road to fuller utilization of the things the newspaper has to offer.

2. *The development of an awareness of the major trends and events in current affairs.* Studies of knowledge of current events on the part of young people and adults, including teachers, reveal that many people have only the vaguest knowledge of men and events in our own time. Regular newspaper reading is essential to an elementary acquaintance with the happenings in the world today. With all their limitations, newspapers, along with radio newscasts, are our chief source of knowledge concerning the contemporary scene. A list of the major events recorded in the newspaper in the course of two or three days of news reporting yields a large volume of information regarding such fields as politics, economics, commerce, sociology, science, religion, education, art, and music. It would appear that the

school could and should utilize more fully and more skilfully the resources provided by the daily newspaper for the preparation of well-informed citizens.

3. The development of powers of discrimination with respect to newspaper reading. While the press performs an indispensable service as an educational agency, and while American journalists are among the most efficient in the world, newspapers are not, in the main, completely reliable as sources of information. Most newspaper reading adults in the United States express lack of confidence in the factual accuracy and impartiality of newspaper reports.

The fact that the publication of a newspaper, or a chain of newspapers, involves heavy financial investment quite naturally tends to create in the publishers a bias in favor of the viewpoint of the large industrialist. The social and political outlook of the advertiser will also necessarily affect the treatment of the news. The need to win and maintain large circulation will often cause newspapers to favor a viewpoint thought to be popular among large sections of the readership. For this reason it is necessary to provide young people with skills that will enable them to read newspapers with discrimination.

Pitfalls in the reading of newspapers take many forms. Least common of these forms is the deliberate misstatement of fact. Much more common is the distortion of the news by means of emphasis upon certain items and by means of underplaying or suppressing others. This practice is probably unavoidable. It is followed by newspapers of every political, economic, and social complexion. It results from the necessity of making choices among available news stories, and from exercising judgments which inevitably involve some prejudices. Some newspapers, of course, make greater efforts than others to present the news impartially. Some newspapers are more successful than others in eliminating "editorializing" from the news col-

umns.

Developing discrimination in reading the newspaper is not a mere process of cultivating skepticism. It is a process of building a broad background of information about the topics under discussion, of inducing an awareness of a given newspaper's bias, and of confronting the reader with a variety of viewpoints on public affairs. In practical terms, this process involves bringing into the classroom a variety of newspapers, magazines, newsletters, pamphlets, and books which will enable the reader to approach the local newspaper with greater intelligence. Reliance upon a single source, or type of source, leaves the reader helpless in the face of whatever purposes may move the publisher.

Procedures in Newspaper Study

A great volume of material has been published on the subject of classroom procedures in the improvement of newspaper reading. Many of the techniques reported are duplicated in the various reference listed below, but the total number of different activities is very large. Some of the more promising of these activities are listed here. They include suggestions for both elementary and secondary schools.

PROJECTS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES

Class Activities

- I. Write a class book on the newspaper. Chapters may be devoted to these or similar topics:
 - A. The ways in which the printing press has changed man's life.
 - B. How the newspaper affects our daily lives.
 - C. The industries connected with newspaper publishing.
 - D. The contributions of the "fighting journalists" (Dana, Garrison, Zenger, etc.) to present-day newspaper journalism.
 - E. Some of the outstanding services to the country performed by news papers during the past war.

- II. Prepare a class exhibit on the newspaper. Invite other classes and your parents to visit the exhibit at an "Open House." The exhibit may consist of projects such as these:
- A. Charts showing:
1. A comparison of the amount of space given to various subjects or types of stories in a tabloid newspaper and more conventional newspapers such as the *New York Times*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Kansas City Star*, or the *Christian Science Monitor*.
 2. The percentage of your town paper which is devoted to advertising and the percentage given to news. (Measure by column inches. Is the paper primarily an advertising or a news medium?)
 3. The special features that can be found in ten of the leading newspapers of the country. Show what can be found in one but not in another, and perhaps compare your findings with your local paper.
 4. The sources from which news generally comes.
- B. Caricatures, or cartoons, which explain:
1. The duties of a newspaper editor, publisher, reporter, copyreader, headlinewriter, and foreign correspondent.
 2. The meaning of the following terms:
Rotogravure
News syndicate
News vs. a feature story
Tabloid
A newspaper chain
Yellow journalism
- III. Present an assembly or PTA program about the newspaper. Activities such as these may be included on the program:
- C. Diagrams showing:
1. A newspaper plant layout
 2. The ways news is gathered
 3. The route news follows, from source to reader
- D. Models, in clay, wood, or papier mache.
- E. Paintings, pencil sketches, or water colorings
- IV. Visit a newspaper plant
- V. Visit a paper mill or newsprint plant
- VI. Visit a radio news room
- VII. Visit an advertising agency
- VIII. Prepare a class newspaper using and following rules set up by the class as to what a good newspaper should do and contain.
- IX. A class survey to find out who the class's favorite (1) news columnist, (2) reporter, (3) comic strip author, (4) sports columnist, (5) features columnist are. Determine if the class's choices have been the wisest and best.

^aSee Spencer Brown, *They See For Themselves*, New York: Harpers, 1945, p. 57-77.

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- X. Make a study of what a reader can expect to find in various types and sizes of newspapers (by using copies of these papers): large metropolitan dailies, tabloids, religious newspapers, papers published by various national or ethnic groups, labor newspapers, newspapers published by companies and corporations, Sunday newspapers, weekly newspapers, and, if possible, newspapers published in other languages.
- XI. Try to find some answers to this question: "What Effect Does the Reading in Our Community Have on Our Thinking?"
- XII. Bring to class articles to be judged by Dale's "Canons of Journalism."⁵
- XIII. Briefly study the history of newspapers in the United States.
- Small Group Projects**
- XIV. A panel discussion: The ways in which radio news and newspaper news are similar, and the ways in which they differ.
- XV. Compare the way in which news articles in newspapers and news magazines (*Time*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week*, *New Republic* and *U. S. News*) are handled. In what major ways do they differ?
- XVI. Make a class survey, using the families of the class members as guinea pigs, of what is read by the different age groups, separating them by sexes.
- XVII. Compare your local newspaper with the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, etc.
- XVIII. Select several newspapers and determine how much space is devoted to crime stories and other of the sordid happenings of the day. Compare the amount of space with the amount given to national news, international news, art, movies, books, and the theatre.
- XIX. Determine the community and welfare projects that have been undertaken in your community during the past year. To what extent did the local paper participate? On the basis of its role in these campaigns, would you say that the paper is, or is not, performing a community service?
- XX. Make a comparison of radio columnists (e.g., Swing, Murrow, Shirer) with newspaper columnists (e.g., Lippman, Lawrence, Fleeson).
- XXI. Make a comparison of newspapers from different sections of the country.
- XXII. Make a comparison of newspapers from different types of communities (farming, residential, industrial, etc.)
- Individual Projects**
- XXIII. Find out all you can about the author of your favorite comic strip: his philosophy of life, his political, social, and economic affiliations, his views on contemporary affairs. To what extent are these views reflected in his work? Present your findings to the class in a talk: "A Personality Profile of _____."
- XXIV. Pick stories which you believe contain a definite bias. Tell the class what you believe this bias is, and what you think the effect of this bias will probably be.
- XXV. Read several issues of *Quill and Scroll*, *Scholastic Tide*, *Editor and Publisher*, and *Broadcasting* to become familiar

⁵Responsibility; Freedom of the Press; Independence; Sincerity, truthfulness, accuracy; impartiality; fair play; decency. Edgar Dale, *How to Read a Newspaper*, New York: Scott, Foresman, 1941.

with the current issues and problems connected with school newspapers, advertising, commercial newspapers, and radio news.

Topics for Panel, Class, and Small Group Discussions

1. Should newspapers suppress news "harmful" to the country?⁶
2. Should newspapers omit names of first offenders in minor crimes?
3. Should newspapers be licensed by the federal government?
4. Should newspapers be permitted to criticize the government?
5. Should newspapers publish beer advertisements?
6. Should newspapers publish whiskey advertisements?
7. Should newspapers publish patent medicine advertisements?
8. Should crime news be put all together on a certain inside page?
9. Should crime news be omitted entirely from newspapers?
10. Do newspapers usually suppress news which will reflect on advertisers or prominent citizens?
11. Do papers in general purposely falsify the news?
12. Are papers generally unfair to labor?
13. Do papers generally publish too much sensational news?
14. Does publication of crime news lead to more crimes?
15. Do papers usually present a fair treatment of opposing political parties?
16. Do newspapers usually present a fair

⁶Items 1-17 are from: Thalheimer, J. A., and Gerick, J. K., "Reader Attitudes Toward Question of Newspaper Policy and Practice", *Journalism Quarterly* XII (Sept. 35), 266-271.

treatment of legislative bodies of the government?

17. Do newspapers usually present a fair treatment of religion?
18. Ask the following questions about any paper you read:
 - a. Who owns the paper?
 - b. What groups in the community is the newspaper eager to attract?
 - c. Who are the advertisers?
 - d. What are the principal factors in the newspaper's editorial policy?
 - e. What groups in the community are likely to benefit from this editorial policy?
 - f. What groups are likely to be harmed by this editorial policy?
 - g. In what ways is this policy expressed throughout the paper?
 - h. Are important items of news suppressed?
19. Are the headlines an accurate summary of the news article, or are they merely glaring fictions to attract readers?
20. What is the point of origin of specific foreign dispatches?
21. Does the paper have too many pictures?
22. Does the paper have too many cartoons?
23. Apply to the newspaper Dale's "Canons of Journalism":
 - a. Responsibility
 - b. Freedom of the press
 - c. Independence
 - d. Sincerity, truthfulness, accuracy
 - e. Impartiality
 - f. Fair play
 - g. Decency
24. In analyzing newspapers these factors should be brought into account:
 - a. Who are its competitors?
 - b. How many pages and sections does it usually have?
 - c. For what feature (s) is it outstanding?

- d. What are the outstanding features of outstanding newspapers in the United States, and in foreign countries?
- e. Who are, if any, the outstanding writers, reporters, analysts, cartoonists, and photographers who contribute to it?
- 25. Does the paper present news accurately, interestingly, adequately?
- 26. Does it interpret the news?
- 27. How does it interpret the news?
- 28. Does the newspaper comment and editorialize upon the news in its "news" articles?
- 29. Does the advertising in the paper help the community carry out its business?
- 30. Does the newspaper help solve business, family, or economic problems?
- 31. Does the newspaper entertain and amuse, but not have this as its sole, or most important, reason for being published?
- 32. Does the newspaper show what reforms or changes in society are needed?
- 33. Does the newspaper help you get the most for your money?
- 34. Does the newspaper help you to see the crime problem clearly?
- 35. Does the newspaper help you to have a good time on a small amount?
- 36. Does the newspaper help you to make up your own mind (not make it up for you)?
- 37. Is the source of news, as given in the news story, a reliable one? Is it a specific person or agency? Does the person hold a responsible position? Does he serve any specific or special interest?
- 38. Which type of news is more accurate—radio or newspaper?
- 39. Would a newspaper without advertisements present the news more accurately?
- 40. In what sense is a newspaper a business enterprise, run for profit for the owner?
- 41. Is there propaganda in newspaper advertisements? What is the function, good or bad, of "public service" advertising?
- 42. How important is freedom of the press in a democracy?
- 43. What are the inventions that have made our newspapers the complex enterprises that they are today?
- 44. How much money is involved—the cash outlay—in publishing a newspaper?
- 45. What are the differences (how does the paper change) in the various editions published during one day?
- 46. Are newspaper headlines usually accurate?
- 47. How much can be learned by reading headlines alone? (Try a class game: Each pupil submit stories, with headlines cut off. Mix them up, and try to match stories with headlines.)
- 48. What is a good definition of "news"? What are its characteristics?
- 49. What are the functions of advertisements?
- 50. Why can some advertisements be grouped together without any display (classifieds) while others must be attractive and showy?
- 51. What stories are usually found on the front page?
- 52. Why are advertisements in a newspaper usually grouped?
- 53. How does the composition of a newspaper *news* story differ from that of nonprofessional news stories?
- 54. What is the function of the editorial page in a newspaper?
- 55. What are the ways in which the function, type, and intent of editorials differ today from those of fifty years ago?
- 56. In what important ways do news stories and feature stories differ?
- 57. Many towns have only one newspaper and one radio station with a single owner. Other towns have a morning newspaper and an evening newspaper, both having

- the same owner. Does this agree with what is usually thought of as "freedom of the press," or with what is usually thought of as "freedom of competition"?
58. What differences can be noted in by-line and non-by-line news stories?
 59. What are some ways in which news is gathered?
 60. What are the meanings of these words which are often found in news stories:
 "alleged"
 "it is reported"
 "from an unknown source"
 "from good authority"
 "it is felt in some circles"
 "an unconfirmed report"
 "no comment"
 "a press conference"?
 61. How may propaganda be defined? Recognized? Combated?
 62. Can propaganda be found in comics, sport news, feature articles, and editorials?
 63. In what ways is your family provided for, or not, in the make-up of your local newspaper?
 64. How does your family usually interpret, or discuss the daily news?
 65. What are slanted headlines?
 66. In what ways can the gist of news be obtained hurriedly from newspapers?

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DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT READERS

(Continued from Page 154)

While it was not surprising that a first grader should have a little difficulty in spelling *especially*, it was amazing to find that all the other words were spelled correctly.

Fortunately, these little writers' messages did not call for words like *rough*, *though*, *anxious*, or *toward*, for example, or the little scribes may not have fared so well.

I cannot recall ever having more appreciative school patrons than we had last year. By the end of the first semester, every child's father or mother had visited us at least once and many came again and

again. They were interested in seeing how their children had learned so much in so short a time. Many mothers came to copy the key words for their own use with the children at home.

If anything could have been more rewarding than the gratitude of the parents it was the joy that radiated from the children with each new success. How often someone told me, "I feel so good inside!"

And why not, dear children? Yours is the golden key to the world's priceless treasures, for you have learned to read.

Recorded Sound Aids

PAT KILLGALLON¹

The modern world demands new standards of efficiency in the fundamental skills of communication. The critical importance of this fact can scarcely be overstated.

In the past, communication has with difficulty kept pace with the growing demands made upon it by social evolution. The resulting chronic maladjustment has now reached the dimensions of a crisis. Despite the remarkable contribution of science to the rapid transmission and appeal, it is a fair question whether modern man will succeed in understanding his world and his neighbors well enough and quickly enough to escape disaster. His struggle to understand has become a race between communication and disaster.²

A large share of the responsibility for meeting these urgent demands must, naturally, be accepted by the language arts teacher. No teacher has greater need, therefore, for the best possible tools of instruction than he. For him, nothing less than full exploitation of every available resource will do.

Few, if any, instructional aids have greater potential value for the English teacher than the sound recording and the sound recorder. They can be helpful in furthering most of her objectives and can be made to contribute in unique fashion to learning activities of nearly every sort. The present discussion reviews recent developments in the field, summarizes research, and suggests some classroom applications.

Clearly enough, listening to recordings has become an important life-activity of school-age America. It presents new needs for guidance and presents a new opportunity to forge a bond between life in the classroom and the world outside.

Some Recent Developments

Interest in recordings has been a spectacular post-war phenomenon. An apparently unlimited

demand has spurred production to tremendous proportions. Numerous new producers have appeared, many of them specializing in recordings for children.

Technical improvements have been made in the recording process; discs of plastic—light, flexible, unbreakable, less noisy, have been developed; Victor has introduced a new micro-groove recording playing at 45 r. p. m., Columbia's new type plays at 33 1/3 r. p. m., and playbacks which will play both in addition to the 16-inch, 78 r. p. m. recordings are now available.

Children now constitute a substantial part of the total consumer market. Millions of recordings are made for them each year. Phonographs have been designed specifically for their use; several record-of-the-month clubs have sprung into existence and several comprehensive guides have been published to help parents and teachers deal intelligently with the difficult problems of selection.

Certain other developments should do much toward stimulating the classroom use of recordings, also. Libraries in increasing numbers are assuming responsibility for collecting, evaluating, and circulating recordings. Textbook publishers have begun to recognize the educational potentialities of recordings. Recordings to accompany a series of basal readers are being prepared; the American Book Company and Decca are collaborating in distributing and providing teaching guides for a selected list of instructional recordings.

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²Yeager, W. Hayes, and Utterback, William E. "Foreword," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. CCL: vii, March, 1947.

This reawakening of interest in the educational possibilities of recordings has been paralleled and perhaps outstripped by developments in the field of instantaneous sound recording.

A new teaching aid in the form of the magnetic recorder has appeared with unique features offering exciting possibilities for many and diversified classroom uses. For, although instantaneous recording on discs has been utilized by schools for some twenty years, magnetic recording possesses advantages which promise to extend the use of sound recording greatly.

In its present stage of development the magnetic recorder offers the teacher simplicity of operation, long playing time, and a recording medium which is editable, erasable, and reusable.

A detailed analysis of the advantages and limitations of disc, wire, and tape recorders is beyond the scope of this discussion. Several excellent analyses are available in the literature (2) (11) (26). Intensive research has resulted in several recent developments which may well be mentioned here.

Tape and wire machines are now available which are sturdy, compact, portable, and relatively inexpensive. A high degree of tonal fidelity and freedom from maintenance difficulties, however, are still expensive (11). Uninterrupted recording and playing time has been steadily increased from 3 or 4 minutes just a few short years ago (18) to 4 hours or even longer. Most school machines permit an hour of continuous recording. Combinations of tape and disk, wire, or tape recorders with built-in radios or radio-phonographs are available. The new micro-groove recording techniques have increased recording time for the disk recorder, also. It is now possible to record a 40 minute program on a 16 inch disc, and equipment for converting the school's present disc recorder to microgroove is readily

obtainable (10).

According to Kemp (9), 44 firms were licensed to produce wire recorders in 1948 and the number of wire recorders in use by the end of that year was expected to reach 400,000. He anticipates the production of educational and entertainment recordings on wire in the near future and foresees the possibility of pupils securing their homework from libraries circulating magnetic recordings to be played over their home radios.

Similar, and probably greater, activity is in progress in the tape recorder field. "Audio Record" provides a comprehensive listing with descriptive information and specifications, and comments:

If the number of tape recorders on the market can be considered as an index of the growth of tape recording, this method of sound reproduction certainly has a bright future ahead. For there are literally dozens of models already in production, and new ones are making their appearance almost daily.³

A Summary of Research

Radio and recordings hold most of their educational values in common. The results of research on the effectiveness of either are in general mutually applicable. Despite small differences in techniques of utilization, basic principles of learning and of instruction apply to each with equal force. The present summary has necessarily been restricted to a consideration of research dealing specifically with recordings. The fact that results of research in radio education have many implications for recordings is fully acknowledged.

Research on recordings as instructional aids has been neither extensive nor conclusive. Most of the information concerning it may be found in the reviews by Reid and Day (19) and Stenius (24), and in the textbook on radio education by Woelfel and Tyler (28). These reviewers agree that much of the research in the field of audio education has dealt with

³Audio Record, 5:1, August-September, 1949.

insignificant problems, that experimental studies have frequently been faulty in design and execution, and that results are often inconsistent and contradictory.

Despite the validity of these criticisms it is possible to marshal considerable research support for the value of recordings in achieving desirable learning outcomes of several types. In no case, it must be admitted, is the evidence conclusive.

There is little doubt that recordings can be used to impart factual information. Carpenter (3) listed the acquisition of facts in science and improved skill in applying the scientific method as outcomes of his study; Rulon (21) reported that reading the typescript of a play proved superior to listening to the recorded version in immediate gains in factual knowledge. After a week, however, the listening group retained a higher percentage of what they had learned.

The effect of recordings on pupil interests and attitudes has been less clearly demonstrated. Miles (14) found an intensification of specific interests through use of supplementary science recordings but noted a concurrent narrowing of the range of interests. Lowdermilk (12) used printed scripts and recordings to compare the influence of reading, of listening, and of reading while listening on pupil attitudes toward freedom of speech and the right of assembly. Reading proved superior to listening, but reading and listening was shown to be superior to each of the other procedures. Rulon (23), too, obtained slight changes in attitude through recordings.

Nickerson (16) and Ginsberg (6) investigated the value of recordings in teaching Shakespearean drama. The Orson Welles—Mercury Theatre recordings were used in each study. In each case favorable results in terms of increased appreciation and understanding were reported.

Rulon (23) compared recordings with printed material to determine their ability to stimulate further study. He concluded that recordings have little value for this purpose. Several other investigators (1) (3) (7) have reported opposite results.

The relative effectiveness of recorded and live broadcasts was investigated by Wrightstone (30). No differences in their effect upon learning were found. Bathurst (1) used especially prepared recordings in nature study, English, and social science in New York state rural schools. The recordings were judged to have aroused interest, stimulated activities and improved thinking and listening abilities. Bathurst observed too that the recordings seemed just as real, just as personal as radio and that breaking the program to turn the recordings was apparently not an important disadvantage. She stressed the important advantage to teachers of one-room schools with their heterogeneous groups of pre-auditing the programs before presentation. Repeatability was considered very important also for slower learners and for absentees. Lowdermilk (13) concurred in finding recordings superior to live broadcasts in these respects.

Few definite generalizations regarding the effectiveness of recording for instructional purposes can be drawn from the results of basic research. Any conclusions derived must be considered tentative. Partly, this is due to the paucity and character of the studies. In part, however, it springs from the fact that the effectiveness of a tool is largely a function of the skill of the user, the purpose for which it is used, and the total situation surrounding its use. It would be surprising, indeed, if the results of efforts to appraise its effectiveness were not at times inconsistent.

Classroom Applications

The recording and the sound recorder together can be a veritable Aladdin's lamp for the modern teacher of English. The resources of

radio and of recording libraries are made available to his summons. They come to him in a form which is inherently interesting to his pupils, and flexible and convenient for him.

The dramatic qualities of recordings warm the emotions and create a strong illusion of reality; thus, the abstract becomes concrete, and facts, personalities, and events come alive. The artistic perfection of a fine professional performance provides guidance through example and becomes a powerful stimulus to emulation. Recording one's own voice taps a universal interest which never wanes and lends strong purpose to oral activities of every kind.

The number of different applications of these fine audio tools which may profitably be made by the language arts teacher is limited only by his ingenuity and imagination. Only a few can be suggested here. Textbooks by Woelfel and Tyler (29), Dale (5), and Willey and Young (28) combine a wealth of helpful suggestions with excellent discussions of principles and methods.

Listening. Whether judged by the criterion of frequency or the criterion of cruciality of great social significance (8), listening is the most important of the language arts. Tyler (26) terms it the number one problem; Dale, Finn, and Hoban (4) declare the "developing of discriminating, critical, listeners—an absolute necessity for the survival of our democracy in the Atomic Age."

Recordings and the recorder seem eminently suited to aid in developing listening comprehension and discrimination. Research shows that the poor listener is ordinarily an inexperienced listener (17). Opportunities to listen to many types of recorded programs for a wide variety of learning purposes is therefore fundamental. Pupils may be taught to formulate goals for listening; to anticipate what may happen or be said next; to make a mental review of points that have been made;

and to search for implied meanings occasionally during the listening period. These are all elements established by research as essential to effective listening (17) (26). The recorder may be used to take listening materials of suitable difficulty and appropriate character from the air, or excellent exercise material may be recorded from printed sources.

Discrimination in listening is achieved in the main by helping pupils to develop their own standards and giving them sufficient opportunity to make the application of these standards habitual. Again, the recorder may be used to advantage. Good and poor programs or parts of programs may be taken from the air for direct comparison, analysis and, later, for practice in application.

Developing critical listening ability, also, begins with the achievement of an awareness on the part of the pupil that he is subject to influences that warp his judgment and frustrate his understanding. The recording of a number of the patent medicine type commercials will provide excellent demonstration material. They seldom claim what they appear to claim. Commercials next may be analyzed for practice in identifying their basic 'appeals'. The techniques and devices of the propagandist are readily illustrated by radio oratory of many kinds and especially good examples may be recorded during political campaigns and preserved for future use. The use of emotion as an intellectual anesthetic may be shown in striking fashion by comparing an address by a scientist with that of a demagogue or "a man with a cause." Prepared exercise material for improving critical reading ability can be recorded and used to advantage occasionally. Finally, since the habit of listening critically should function regardless of what the purpose for listening may be, much may be accomplished by persistently encouraging pupils to evaluate all their listening experiences. The recorder would appear to be an ideal tool

for providing highly valid illustrative materials of current significance in a form which permits repetition for careful analysis and free discussion.

Speaking. Recent evidence suggests that oral English instruction in a majority of classrooms is characterized by unguided practice in which techniques are given primacy over ideas; by lessons in which teachers dominate and pupils are apathetic; and by great dependence upon unapplied, isolated, practice exercises (18). Such conditions warrant the prescription of auditory aids—in large doses.

Recordings may be used to some advantage for improving oral communication skills at every level. Benefits to primary children from experiences with good recordings will be incidental but may be greater than is generally suspected. It is at upper elementary and high school levels, however, that recordings can make their chief contribution.

Here they may be used to motivate instruction in its initial stages. The recorded voices and speeches of the presidents and of other eminent figures of the past or the Abe Lincoln in Illinois recordings will serve admirably. Subsequently recordings may be used to stimulate oral discussion, suggest speech topics, and, of course, to provide examples at every stage. All the forms oral communication may take, all the techniques which skilled speakers employ, all the qualities which make the human voice an unrivalled instrument for transmitting information and manipulating emotions may be illustrated by recordings.

The sound recorder makes its major educational contribution in this area of the curriculum. Its applications are numerous and the accruing educational values in each instance are obvious. A simple listing of a number of applications with a minimum of discussion would appear sufficient for present purposes:

1. Recording pupil speech is an almost sure-fire method of enlisting participation in oral language activities. Hearing one's own voice as it actually sounds exerts a strong, universal, lasting appeal.

2. Giving pupils an opportunity to record and analyze speech samples at intervals has long been a successful method of speech improvement. Gross faults in rate, pitch, enunciation, pronunciation, etc., are rapidly overcome. Speech defects, of course, are more stubborn.

3. The candid microphone technique used occasionally on an unsuspecting group is a real aid in encouraging careful speech.

4. Recordings of group discussions, forums, round-tables, conversation practice, debates, staged interviews, etc., are useful in teaching the respective techniques involved, stimulate high standards of performance, and help to develop speech consciousness. Comparison with samples taken from radio will aid materially.

5. Simulated broadcasting whenever broadcasting facilities are unavailable is almost as real as actual broadcasting when the program is recorded and played for an audience. Real motivation is provided for all the related language activities involved in preparing script, casting, rehearsing, and producing.

6. The recorder is rapidly becoming standard equipment for the dramatic coach. Rehearsals are frequently recorded several times before the final production, and the recordings are used to improve interpretation, correct speech and voice inadequacies, revise lines and make other desirable changes.

7. Pupils may go into the community to attend and record public forums, speeches, service club meetings and similar functions. Meeting and interviewing visiting celebrities and local community leaders regardless of the purposes to which the recordings may later be put is clearly a most worthwhile experience.

Many other pertinent applications could be mentioned, but it seems unnecessary. The teacher will find opportunities to use the recorder for oral English instruction at every turn. She may well discover, too, that hearing her own voice (perhaps hearing it much too often) may be a revealing educative experience.

Reading. Successful utilization of the recorder in oral remedial reading has been reported (31). Samples were recorded to reveal errors and to demonstrate progress. Recordings furnished examples of good reading. But the effectiveness of either the recorder or of recordings for improving reading skills directly is probably quite limited. Recordings have unquestioned value as a stimulus to reading and they may be used to increase vocabulary. Before children learn to read, their needs for reading may be stimulated, their experiences broadened, and their interests in books developed by listening to the many splendid story recordings now available. Later, recordings may be used preparatory to the reading of new types of stories or of new forms of literature with good effect.

Recordings are best adapted, however, to the task of developing appreciation and understanding of those forms of literature which require oral presentation—poetry and drama. An abundance of superb recordings for these purposes is available. The recorder may render great service by tapping that greatest of all sources of dramatic fare—radio.

Writing. The legitimate functions of audio aids in this area of the language arts may be important though not numerous. Something to write about and real purposes for writing are perennial problems in the English classroom. The sound recorder with its ability to bring to the classroom the important events, the problems and issues, the personalities in the news—in short, the color and drama of life as radio presents it—can be very helpful in stimulating ideas. Recordings, particularly those

dealing with the broad social problems of our time can be stimulating too.

When what one writes is destined to be recorded for real or simulated broadcasting, the purpose for writing is real and exacting. And every form of creative writing may be required for broadcasting sooner or later, if the instructor be both wise and subtle.

A List of Sources

Producers and Distributors of Recordings

- American Automobile Association
Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th St.
Washington, D. C.
- The American Social Hygiene Association
50 West 50th Street
New York, New York
- American Dental Association
222 East Superior Street
Chicago 11, Illinois
- American Jewish Committee
386 Fourth Avenue
New York 16, New York
- American Legion
National Public Relations Radio Branch
Indianapolis, Indiana
- Audio-Scriptions
1619 Broadway
New York 19, New York
- Bel-Tone Records
8624 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles 86, Calif.
- Bibletone Records
354 Fourth Avenue
New York 18, New York
- Black and White Recording Company, Inc.
4910 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif.
- Brisacher, Van Norden, and Staff, Inc.
Petroleum Building
Los Angeles, California
- Bureau of Health Education
American Medical Association

- 535 North Dearborn Street
Chicago 10, Illinois
- Campus Christian Recording Corporation
1226 E. Eighth St.
Los Angeles 21, Calif.
- Capitol Records
Sunset and Vine
Hollywood 28, Calif.
- Center for Safety Education
New York University, Washington Square
New York, New York
- Children's Productions, Inc.
Box 1313
Palo Alto, California
- Columbia Recording Corporation
799 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York
- Cosmopolitan Records, Inc.
745 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York
- Community Chest Records
155 East 44th Street
New York, New York
- Commodore Record Co.
136 E. 42nd St.
New York 17, New York
- Decca Records, Inc.
50 West 57th Street
New York, New York
- Disc Company of America, Inc.
117 W. 46th St.
New York 19, New York
- Division of Libraries for Children
American Library Association
520 North Michigan Ave.
Chicago 11, Ill.
- Eccles Disc Recordings, Inc.
Pantages Theater Building
Hollywood, California
- Educational Recording Service
19-25 North Third Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona
- Educational Radio Script and Transcription Exchange
- Federal Radio Education Committee
U. S. Office of Education
Washington, D. C.
- Educational Recorders, Inc.
171 South Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, California
- Franco-American Audio-Visual Distribution Center, Inc.
934 Fifth Avenue
New York 21, New York
- General Records Company
1600 Broadway
New York, New York
- The Gramophone Shop, Inc.
18 West 48th Street
New York, New York
- Graphic Educational Productions, Inc.
1106 Lillian Way
Hollywood 38, Calif.
- Harry S. Goodman
19 East 53rd St. at Madison Ave
New York, New York
- Harmonia Records Corp.
1328 Broadway
New York 1, New York
- Halligan Studios
475 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York
- Harper & Brothers
49 East 33rd Street
New York, New York
- Harvard Film Service
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Horizon Records
521 Fifth Avenue
New York 17, New York
- Ideal Pictures Corp.
2408 West 7th Street
Los Angeles 5, California

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

- Institute for Democratic Education
101 Park Avenue
New York, New York
- Intercontinental Audio-Video Corp.
44 Horation Street
New York, New York
- Institute for Consumer Education
Stephens College
Columbia, Missouri
- Keynote Recordings, Inc.
522 Fifth Avenue
New York 18, New York
- Language Service Center
18 East 41st Street
New York, New York
- Lewellen's Productions
8 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago 3, Illinois
- Linguaphone Institute
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York
- C. P. Mac Gregor
729 South Western Avenue
Hollywood, California
- Mercury Radio and Television Corp.
228 N. La Salle Street
Chicago 1, Ill.
- Musette Publishers, Inc.
113 W. 57th Street
New York 19, New York
- Musicraft Records, Inc.
10 West 47th Street
New York, New York
- Music You Enjoy, Inc.
420 Lexington Ave.
New York 17, New York
- NBC Radio-Recording Division
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York
- New Tools to Learning
280 Madison Ave.
New York 16, New York
- National Council of Teachers of English
211 West 68th Street
Chicago 21, Illinois
- Pacific Sound Equipment Company
7373 Melrose Avenue
Hollywood, California
- Popular Science Publishing Company
Audi-Visual Division
353 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York
- The Pronunciphone Company
1315 Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois
- Radio Arts Guild
Wilmington, Ill.
- Radio Transcription Company of America,
LTD.
Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, California
- RCA Manufacturing Company, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey
- Simmel-Meservey
321 South Beverly Drive
Beverly Hills, California
- Sonora Products, Inc.
730 Fifth Avenue
New York 19, New York
- Timely Records, Inc.
123 West 23rd Street
New York, New York
- Tone Products Corporation
351 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York
- Toono, Inc.
1156 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut
- United States Recording Company
1121 Vermont Avenue; N. W.
Washington, D. C.
- Vogue Recordings, Inc.
410 Book Bldg.
Detroit, Mich.

Winnant Productions
300 W. 43rd Street
New York 18, New York

World Book Company
Yonkers-on-Hudson
New York, New York
World Broadcasting System, Inc.
711 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York
Young People's Records, Inc.
295 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Basic Aids to Selection

1949 *Listing of Educational Recordings for More Effective Learning*

Educational Services
1702 K Street, N. W.

Washington, D. C. (free upon request)

Recordings for School Use, by J. Robert Miles.
Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.

World Book Co., 1942. \$1.24.

Several hundred recordings fully described and evaluated.

A Catalogue of Selected Educational Recordings, Recordings Division, New York University, Film Library, Washington Square, New York. \$.15.

An excellent selection of recordings for purchase.

Catalog of Radio Recordings, Educational Script and Transcription Exchange Federal Security Agency

U. S. Office of Education
Washington 25, D. C.

Single copies free. Many excellent recorded programs which may be rented.

A Selected List of Sound Recorders
(Only medium-priced models are included. Prices must be considered approximate only)

Tape Recorders

Amplifier Corp. of America
396-398 Broadway, New York 13, New York
Twin-Trax Magnemuse, Model 810B, \$285.

Audio Industries
Michigan City, Ind.
Ultratone, Model PT-9, \$189.50

Bell Sound Systems, Inc.
1183 Essex Ave.,
Columbus 3, Ohio
Re-Cord-O-Fone, Model RT-50R, \$189.50

Brush Development Company
3405 Perkins Ave.
Cleveland 14, Ohio
Soundmirror, Model BK-411, \$199.50.
Soundmirror, Model BK-414, \$229.50.

Mark Simpson Mfg. Co., Inc.
32-28 49th St.,
Long Island City 3, N. Y.
MASCO Model R-3, \$218.50.
MASCO Model 375, \$189.50.

Pentron Corporation
611 W. Division St.,
Chicago 10, Ill.
The Pentron Astra-Sonic, Model T549,
\$179.50.

Sound Recorder & Reproducer Corp.
5501 Wayne Avenue
Germantown, Philadelphia 44, Penna.
Magnesonic, \$199.50.

Tapetone Manufacturing Corp.
Sales Office: Broadcasting Program Service
1650 Broadway
New York 19, N. Y.
Portable Model, \$229.00.

Wilcox-Gay Corporation
Charlotte, Michigan
Portable Tape Disc Recordio, \$187.50.

Wire Recorders

Air King Products Company, Inc.
1523 63rd Street
Brooklyn 32, New York
Air King, \$139.50

Electronics Sound Engineering Co.
4344-46 Armitage Avenue
Chicago 39, Illinois

Polyphonic Sound, PS179, \$210.00
 Lafayette-Concord Radio
 100 Sixth Avenue
 New York 13, New York
 Astrasonic, \$149.50.
 Portable Entertainment Center, \$159.50.
 Precision Audio Products, Inc.
 1133 Broadway
 New York 10, New York
 Wiremaster, \$295.50 (without microphone)
 Radio Corp. of America
 Camden, New Jersey
 RCA Wire Recorder, \$195.00.
 Wire Recording Corporation of America
 76 Varick Street
 New York 13, New York
 Wireway, \$149.50.

*Disc Recorders
 (With Dual Speed Playback)*

Allied Radio
 833 West Jackson Blvd.
 Chicago 7, Illinois
 Masco Disc Recorder, \$87.92
 Lafayette-Concord Radio
 100 Sixth Avenue
 New York 13, New York
 35N 22575, \$78.92.
 Combination, 35R 22576, \$99.95.
 Meissner Mfg. Division
 Maguire Industries, Inc.
 Mt. Carmel, Ill.
 Radio-Phono Recorder, \$174.50.
 Speak-o-phone Recording and Equipment Co.
 23 West 60th Street
 New York, New York
 Speak-o-phone, \$112.50
 Wilcox-Gay Corp.
 Charlotte, Michigan
 6A20, \$149.50.

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Vocabulary Readiness

ETHEL MABIE FALK¹

A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used.

O. W. Holmes

Children's vocabularies have been studied by parents and research workers many times and in many ways. Vocabulary has been considered in relation to several different factors and by many different methods. In this article it would be difficult to compare results and impossible to pool the findings of all of these studies, so selections will be made of those having special significance for teachers.

What is the relation of intelligence to vocabulary?

Does social and economic status affect the child's vocabulary?

Does being an only child affect vocabulary?

Teachers are interested in the results of such studies, but they are more interested in discovering the relation of vocabulary growth to factors over which they have control. The emphasis in this summary is on studies that have implications for classroom use. Excellent summaries of general vocabulary studies have been made by Seegers (15) and (16). It is hoped that teachers will have access to these reports.

Size of Vocabularies

For many years the average child's vocabulary at entrance to first grade has been estimated at about 2500 words. Reports of studies concerned with size and nature of young children's vocabularies by Waldron, Leyman, Rinsland, Stoneburner, Galter, Fry, Trent, Madeline Horn, Uhrbrook, Madora H. Smith and many others are summarized in the Seventh Annual Research Bulletin of the National Conference on Research in English (15).

More recently Robert H. Seashore has startled students of language and provoked some controversy (17) by estimating the average child's vocabulary at entrance to grade one as 17,000 basic words plus 7,000 derivatives with the brighter children knowing as many as 40,000 (14).

Variations in counts of six-year-old children's vocabularies are to be expected when one considers that no one can possibly keep an accurate record of words used by a child of that age. The counts are estimates only, different assumptions underlie the method of estimating, and various techniques are used by investigators. But above all, there is the difficulty of recording the vocabulary or the responses of pre-school children.

By *vocabulary* some investigators mean all the different words that a child actually uses in speaking. Those studies have been limited to a very few children whose statements have been recorded at intervals by listeners or by recording devices from which tabulations are made later. Such studies do not indicate how many words other children of that age might say nor even the same children under different conditions and are therefore hardly sufficient data from which the teacher may generalize.

Other research workers have attempted to count the words which children understand by using a sampling of words from the dictionary. The techniques include (1) asking a child to tell in his own terms what a word means; (2) asking him to say whether he knows the word or not; (3) having him use the word in a phrase or sentence to show the meaning; or, (4) recognizing the correct meaning in a multiple choice test; and, (5) using pictures to

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stimulate his saying of the word. In addition to the difficulty of securing an accurate count of words known there is the problem of deciding when a child's knowledge of a word is accurate and complete enough to be useful to him; for example, is his understanding sufficient if he can give one of the many meanings for *back*? Does the giving of a definition mean that the child can use the word to express his own ideas so that others will understand what he means? How vague the child's understandings of words often are and also how new words are added to a speaking vocabulary are illustrated by the following incident: While her mother was giving her a bath a seven-year-old said, "You wash my left arm. My right one isn't available." Then with a chuckle she added, "What does *available* mean?" When her mother explained she said, "I thought so. I had heard you say that something wasn't 'available in the stores'."

Children who are less talkative might not reveal their confusions. Word counts indicate nothing of the quality of the words used nor the exactness with which they are used. With the present concern about personal and social adjustment teachers are interested also in the suitability of vocabulary for the occasion and the effect of language upon the attitudes of listeners. Children discriminate between tones very early:

When a four-year-old's mother told her that "shut up" was not a good way to talk to her playmates she explained, "Why, it's just another way of saying 'stop talking' only you are supposed to say it loud like this, SHUT UP!"

Seashore and other research workers have commented on the gap between the extensive, interesting vocabularies that children use and the sterility of ideas and repetition of words in primers. Hughes (7) was impressed with the stereotyped content, the lack of ongoing experience in the readers as contrasted with children's reports to their classmates.

On the other hand, many studies reviewed by Seegers indicate the opposite condition—that frequently there are children who need background information and help with the understanding of concepts in order to use the books published for first grade. Farm children may know nothing of the zoo or of city transportation while city children may not know *field, tractor, silo*, and other rural terms.

Teachers themselves point out that research students have ignored the satisfaction and stimulation that the child gains from the process of learning to read. For a brief time, while his aim is to identify words and to read independently he is excited by his accomplishment rather than by the meanings which the words convey. Easy vocabulary enables him to make the adjustment to independent reading early so that he is ready to attack the more varied, interesting content. On the other hand, if he cannot master the task of learning to read, even the most interesting content will be lost to him.

For a teacher the important conclusions to gain from the many studies of size of vocabularies of children are:

1. That estimates of the size of vocabularies reveal little about the number of words known by the individual child in her class.
2. That the variations among the pupils in a class may be very great.
3. That no study can reveal the potential vocabulary of a child in a stimulating environment.
4. That her selection of reading materials and her procedures in beginning reading should depend upon the size and quality of the vocabularies of the children whom she is teaching.

Discovering the Extent of Vocabulary Knowledge in a Class of Children

Both kindergarten and first-grade teachers would welcome some suggestions from research on the problem of discovering how adequate are the vocabularies of the pupils of their own

classes. Research has been confined to many studies of individual children by parents or observers through techniques too detailed for the teacher to use or to studies of large numbers of pupils by sampling and statistical procedures not accurate nor practical for classroom use.

Many readiness tests contain vocabulary sections which are helpful and suggestive although not completely reliable measures.

Classroom teachers themselves have devised plans. Kindergarten and first-grade teachers in Madison, Wisconsin, worked together in a study of the various aspects of readiness (2). One committee used pictures extensively both in discovering and in developing vocabulary. Another used the words of primers and pre-primers. Each child was tested for his knowledge of the nouns found in the list. Lists of words that teachers may use in this way are given in several studies. A recent one has been compiled by MacLatchy (10). Although the statement is commonly made that vocabularies of readers are far too limited the Madison teachers found inadequate concepts among many children where home experiences were meager. They also discovered many children who were unable to express their ideas.

This leads to the importance of considering vocabulary as only one aspect of the child's language experience. Mary Fisher (4) comments, "When children do not talk about their work and play, how can the teacher discover what words they lack, or indeed, what if anything they think?"

Watts (19) also comments upon the importance of the child's learning to talk about what he has been or is doing to avoid, as he says (p. 44) "seeing without thinking, doing without talking, hearing without listening." Watts warns also of permitting children to use gestures rather than to describe or explain. "In a world where we are often pressed for time and looked to constantly for sympathy we are apt to take a meaning for granted when not always

adequately expressed: 'You know what I mean' is a frequent locution among us. Therefore, the parent or the teacher who is really interested in the linguistic progress of children would do well occasionally to misunderstand what is said and misunderstand deliberately though good humorously when he is sure that a little extra effort would make the young speaker's meaning very much clearer both to himself and to others." (p. 42).

Madora H. Smith used questions, pictures, and objects to elicit vocabulary and she evolved a vocabulary test (18). Any teacher might use the same plan if she wished to test her class on a specific list of words.

Observations, frequent although brief, will reveal more of what the teacher needs to know about the child's vocabulary and language characteristics generally than formal testing. Because the inarticulate child often develops feelings of inferiority, has inadequate social skills, and is not able to progress normally and happily he should be the one studied most closely by the teacher. The verbal child is likely to demand attention so that the teacher is grateful to and forgetful of the quiet child who conceals his ignorance and his problems by being docile and unobtrusive. Brief notations on cards will be useful in planning the readiness program for the group and in evaluating progress later.

Concentrate on two or three children who are working in a group. Observe their ability to give each other precise directions, to differ without quarreling, to commend each other for doing something well. Watts comments that speaking centers at first around disputes, and suggests that teachers recognize argument as natural and help children to state differences adequately and coolly. "Otherwise it may be a long time before the need is felt for supporting assertions with a show of reason," p. 69. Piaget (12), who discovered only 61% of what he called "social speech" (in which the speaker is concerned about having a listener) among the

children whom he observed, comments upon this tendency to argue. That the activity upon which the children are engaged affects the nature of their speech was found in two other investigations where Piaget's technique was used in observing groups of children (8) and (9). Both found that the desire to communicate with others was conditioned by the situation. Mabie (8) found that play requiring co-operation, the setting up of a store, for example, was more productive of communication than competitive games. These are indications that teachers will find the best opportunities for recording vocabulary and language in group activities that require playing and planning together.

Because of the importance of emotional tone in personal relations the teacher may well note on the record cards the child who forces his ideas upon others by a positive tone, the one who silences opposition by a scornful remark, the one who is hesitant about making a comment and says it shyly so that others disregard it, the chatterbox who talks much but has few ideas, etc.

Increasing the Vocabulary of the Child

The most significant factor in the increase of vocabulary is intelligence. There seems to be some indication that girls' vocabularies develop more rapidly than boys'. Richer home environment also seems to mean better vocabularies especially where adults in the family spend time with their children answering questions, reading stories, discussing things seen, and conversing about many things. Whatever the specific factors in vocabulary development are, it is evident that children's knowledge and vocabularies grow at approximately the same rate revealing the function of language in acquiring knowledge and the challenge to the school to increase vocabulary by enriching experience.

Children are eager to know the right names for the objects in their environment: The author had an illustration of that fact when her

daughter was four. The child asked, "What's that?" as she pointed to the thermostat on the wall. Trying to use words that she thought the child would understand the mother explained that it told how warm the air in the room was and that if the air were cold the furnace would start and warm the room. The child listened tolerantly and then asked, "But what *is* it?" Again the mother explained that it was like the thermometer that hung outside the window. Again the child said, "But what *is* it?" Finally the mother said, "A thermostat." The child repeated the word and walked away satisfied. The entire explanation had been lost on her. All she really wanted was to know its name.

The story indicates that adults would do well to use the right names for objects many times when children do not fully comprehend the meaning. After all, even adults find words like *democracy*, *kindness*, *tradition* taking on deeper and richer meaning with repeated experience. Yet who would deny their right to use a word before they know its meaning in full!

Excursions are an excellent source of vocabulary. Every teacher has observed casually what Alma Cantor (1) found out definitely in her study of excursions. She has stated that more than two hundred concepts were given background in experience through excursions. She suggested that cooperative planning by kindergarten and first-grade teachers would enhance the values to the children. The Madison teachers also recommend this joint planning to avoid duplication of trips and to enable first-grade teachers to build on the background provided by earlier trips (2).

Two cautions should be sounded. One is that observation alone does not increase vocabulary. Unless the teacher or parent or a classmate who knows answers questions, supplies the words for the object or the situation, and discusses the trip the child has no way to acquire the new words that the excursion could

provide. He might see a mole crawling on the ground or discover a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis without getting any of the words necessary to describe the incident to someone else. *Vocabulary is increased not by the experience alone but by the discussion that accompanies the experience.*

This fact, the need to talk about what they see, makes necessary and advisable the small group excursion so that every child may see, ask questions, and talk about what he sees. Some teachers have asked parents either to conduct the excursion to a farm, the library, the lake shore, the corner grocery, etc. or to provide the remainder of the class with a story hour while the teacher conducts the excursion. The latter method seems to give more effective results, particularly in pleasurable relations between the visiting parent and the children. Ordinarily the teacher is more skilled in conducting trips.

A second caution is the need to correct misunderstandings and wrong concepts through discussion. The little girl who visited a pet hospital and heard about distemper shots said they were "Shots that you give to children so they won't get into bad tempers." If children are encouraged to talk about their confusion over the words they hear they can avoid misunderstanding and laugh with their parents and teachers as they recall what they "used to think."

Parents and teachers should be extremely alert in discovering what experiences the child lacks because children learn early to conceal their inadequacies in silence. A first-grade teacher found to her amazement that only a few children in her room had ever seen a sunset. They lived in an area where buildings hid the sun in the early evening.

One study among others that indicates the lack of experience and paucity of concepts among kindergarten pupils was made by Pratt and Meighen (13). They report that among 435 children only 65 had ever attended a circus.

While 83 per cent of the children reported that they had visited farms, only 48 per cent knew where the farmer got eggs. This study revealed many examples of the statement that the experience in itself does not provide either a clear understanding of what the teacher may assume that the child is learning nor the specific vocabulary that the experience is supposed to teach. It must include explanation and discussion that will clarify concepts.

Children and adults are often talking different languages. We must constantly challenge the meanings that children are gaining and ask them to question what they do not understand. A mother reading "A Wood's Story" to her child came to the incident in which the beaver climbed up on the *bank*. The child asked how a beaver could do that. The mother discovered during the conversation that the child had two meanings for bank, her own little savings bank and the big stone bank building down town. Neither meaning fitted into the story.

A child may use a word correctly many times but on some occasion reveal that his meaning for it was not accurate, as in the case of the child who said, "I have lots of *parents*, Mommy, Daddy, Grandma, Aunt Ella and Susan (the sitter)." When asked what a *parent* was the child replied, "Someone who takes care of me." To many words the child attaches a wrong meaning before getting a complete, accurate one. Only an alert teacher who gives children constant practice in the use of the new words they are learning can discover what meanings they are attaching to them.

A mother whose child has many books places the stories that her child has heard second in importance to conversation as a source of vocabulary growth. A few of the books mentioned as arousing questions and provoking repetition of words were *This is the World*, *Friendship Valley*, *The Pull-Out Picture Book*, *The Little House*, *The Raccoon Twins*, and *The Little Island*. As with excursions it is important

to encourage the child to question the reader about words that he does not understand. Books should be selected within the level of comprehension of the class but with occasional new and interesting words that require the child to stretch his vocabulary.

Needed Research in Vocabulary

Group Research by Classroom Teachers

Much valuable information could be discovered if two or more kindergarten or first-grade teachers would conduct identical studies with their classes, comparing and compiling results.

Possible areas to explore in this way are:

1. The effect of excursions upon vocabulary and language ability.
2. A study of story books most effective in developing vocabulary and stimulating discussion.
3. The effectiveness of a direct attack upon vocabulary, making sentences to show the different meanings of a word, asking children to give the words suggested by pictures, etc.
4. The effect of size of the conversation of the group upon vocabulary growth.

The teacher's principal concern is how to go about building richer understandings. Usually she must discover for herself which trips are most productive, which stories are most helpful, which discussions most stimulating.

Parent Co-operation in Research

To date, the studies of the effect of comic books upon vocabulary have given little cause for serious concern, but many parents are not convinced. They would be interested in working with teachers on a study of the effects of radio and of comic books upon the language and particularly the attitudes of children.

Parents would be glad to co-operate with another type of study by arranging for their children to have experiences that involve home participation. Such concepts as *level measure-*

ment, pre-heat, quarter of a cup, sifter, the distinction between stir, beat, and fold or between boil, broil, and bake may come from having boys and girls help mother with the cooking. Gardening, sewing, cleaning, taking care of younger children, games, and family celebrations are all valuable for such a study.

Too often parents feel that the only way in which they can broaden their children's lives and language is through travel. They are not aware of the possibilities of their own homes and communities and particularly of the out-of-doors for building vocabulary.

Testing Techniques

There is need for more adequate testing tools for measuring vocabulary and language readiness.

The Relation between Vocabulary Growth and Other Language Ability

Does having the right word to express his meaning make the child more willing to express his ideas, avoid a quarrel by explaining, or make friends by discussing common interests?

Does the child's vocabulary affect his status in his group, his popularity with other children, make him quicker to understand what others are saying?

Since the child's ability to express himself plays so large a part in his happiness we cannot be content until research invades these more subtle aspects of language growth. The methods of study have not yet been devised but they will be if our ingenuity and our efforts are used to that end.

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Readiness for Spelling

HENRY D. RINSLAND¹

It is a strange commentary that although a vast amount of research has been carried on in the field of spelling during the past twenty-five years and much has been done in reading readiness, little has been done in readiness for spelling. Perhaps, readiness in spelling has been assumed when children are assigned the task of writing or when teachers judge that writing readiness has been psychologically born. A desire to spell may not be by itself a sufficient indication of readiness to introduce a spelling program either formal or informal, for not all children who want to read experience immediate success in reading, and it is very likely that this parallel situation exists in spelling although research is wanting at this point.

McIntyre and Hampton (5) suggest that readiness in spelling hinges upon the mental and physical maturity of the pupil; that the eye must be trained to move across a word from left to right; that a thorough teaching of phonics as a fundamental is necessary, although they admit that English words contain many nonphonetic elements. They plead for a spelling readiness program, but make no suggestion, other than those mentioned here, as to what the program should be.

Campsey and Beck (1) call attention only to the facts that muscular coordination may be a factor in spelling readiness, that the child's own pronunciation is highly important, that mental maturity, and a rich background of experience are important factors in determining the age of readiness.

Wilson (10) suggests that a major help in observing the approach of readiness in spelling is the beginning of a need which the child feels to express himself in writing, such as his name,

a little letter to a member of the family, copying from his book or from things the teacher has written, and other well-known classroom stimuli. She thinks that formal spelling may be delayed until Grade III. The exact definition of formal spelling is not given although it is implied as being spelling with stimulation and assignment from a spelling book.

The only experiment reported in the literature in spelling readiness was conducted by Russell (7) in which 116 pupils were studied in first and second grades and each was given six group tests and seven individual tests. The results in some detail are as follows: The group participating in the rather direct type of reading instruction involving considerable phonics and early practices in handwriting made greater achievement in eleven out of twelve tests given, and ten out of twelve tests had a correlation with spelling ability in the second grade ranging from .67 to .88. It is probable that habits of attention directed to parts of the word, as seeing similarities and differences, are conducive to initial success in spelling. Spelling ability in the second grade was closely related to abilities in word recognition, paragraph meaning, the recognition of capitals and lower case letters, visual perception, and auditory perception. In the "phonic group" spelling ability was more highly correlated with reading ability than in the "little phonic group;" in the latter spelling ability was more closely related to chronological age than mental age. There seems to exist a constellation of certain skills which are basic in the language arts and can be taught. Spelling readiness seems to be acquired in the high first grade by most of the pupils involved; practically all the pupils studied can spell ten words and their teachers estimate that 2/5 to

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1/4 can spell fifty words by the end of the first grade. A spelling readiness test, as such, is probably not needed in the primary grades because spelling ability can be tested directly and because spelling ability is closely related to reading ability as measured by the tests.

The discovery by Rinsland (6) of 5,099 different words in 353,874 running words in the oral and written work of first grade children, and 5,821 different words out of 408,540 running words in the written work of second grade children, shows that a great deal of word learning has been accomplished at these levels. The further fact that the first 1,000 words make up 92 per cent of all spoken and written words in Grade I and 94 per cent of all written words in Grade II, is evidence of the large amount of word knowledge children have. For the first grade, these occurrences range from 9 to 5.295 times per 100,000 running words and for the second grade, from 6.8 to 4,545.2 times per 100,000 running words. These data are a comparable measure of the usefulness of these first 1,000 words to children. Children are not only ready for spelling, they *are* spelling. The importance of the problem has undoubtedly been intensified since this discovery. Certainly the systematic psychology of learning words can help children to do better what they are doing already.

The possibility that readiness in spelling and readiness in reading are similar is suggested by Gates and Russell (4) in the statement that a rich reading program in the first grade does much to prepare a pupil for a spelling program in the second grade; that although the mental age necessary for beginning spelling is not known, it may be that, like reading, the program employed largely determines the mental age for learning successfully.

As Russell (8) has pointed out, good spellers are usually good readers in both speed and comprehension, and poor spellers are usually,

although not quite so consistently, poor readers. Good spellers also tend to make fewer errors in such elements as enunciation and pronunciation, and because many items of the two subjects are similar and related, there are several similar and identical elements in spelling readiness and reading readiness. The interrelation of these two phases of language arts, with a definite relationship between good writing and spelling, but usually not speed in handwriting, suggests many avenues of experimentation. Research in spelling readiness as well as practices in first grade informal spelling will undoubtedly do much to facilitate the beginnings of formal spelling in the second grade.

Gates (2), as early as 1922, indicated the relationship between disabilities in spelling and reading. Gates (3) was convinced of the importance of the relationship of the two activities, and suggested that the spelling program take a very large responsibility for teaching the meaning of words and many of the facts and conventions about words; that many techniques should be mainly developed in spelling and applied or used in reading; that when a broader method of word analysis is employed, including skill in observing whole words, in dictating letters, monograms, syllables, and striking parts like double letters, better results are obtained. He believed that the whole word analysis and generalization program should comprise a uniform pattern of both reading and spelling.

Gates (3) also suggests that many concepts of meanings are implications of prefixes and suffixes, and that these are largely the problems of the spelling program; that just as the generalization and understanding approach has profited reading, so they would profit spelling. Besides, the same approach in reading and spelling would increase power and interest in both activities.

Undoubtedly many phases of reading and spelling should be taught, not as two subjects, but as phases or variations of one larger subject, the language arts, for there is much in common in the skills, achievements, and attitudes, in this total block of language experience. When the broader aspects of word analysis are employed in reading and spelling which include skill in observing words as wholes, in detecting syllables, phonograms, double letters and the like, there is emphasis and encouragement in the learning of both reading and spelling.

Word meanings contribute much to reading and similarly can contribute much to spelling, for learning to spell words outside of their meaningful situations is similar to rote memory of other isolated facts and things and is uninteresting and dull. When meanings in spelling and reading are related, children have more need for spelling because as they understand words in their own stories and statements they have a greater drive for writing them. As Gates (3) says, this situation is undoubtedly magnified in the use of capitalization, homonyms, abbreviations and contractions where, as in reading, exact knowledge of these factors is not so essential and is one of recognition; but in writing these things must be recalled and they must be accurate. When the child learns how to spell a word he is more likely to write it as it is a part of his expressive nature.

The implications here are obvious that the teacher of beginning reading should also be vitally concerned with the beginnings of spelling and the relationship between the two. Undoubtedly there are in this concept many suggestions for experimentation and research.

The large number of spoken and written words by first grade children and the meager research presented suggest that studies of readiness for spelling might be as profitable as the many findings in readiness for reading.

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Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVOTNY¹

Radio and Television

In the December issue of *Elementary English*, this column presented the Program Listing Service prepared under the auspices of Gertrude Broderick, Radio Education Specialist, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C. Changes and additions have been released to bring the original listing up to date.²

Additions

Sunday

FAMILY HOUR OF STARS (J-S-A)

6:00 - 6:30 p. m. CBS Sta._____

Local time_____

A radio repertory company comprised of well-known stars of screen and radio and a variety of dramatic presentations of original scripts.

AMERICAN FORUM OF THE AIR (S-A)

4:30 - 5:00 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Discussion of current controversial issues with various points of view presented by guest speakers. Theodore Granik is moderator.

HARVEST OF STARS (J-S-A)

5:30 - 6:00 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Orchestras and chorus directed by Frank Black. Soloist James Melton with guest for evening.

RADIO CITY PLAYHOUSE (J-S-A)

5:00 - 5:30 NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Original dramatizations and adaptations.

AMERICAN ALBUM OF FAMILIAR MUSIC (J-S-A)

9:30 - 10:00 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Orchestra, singers, choir, directed by Gustave Haneschen.

BEHIND THE STORY (J-S-A)

11:00 - 11:15 p. m. MBS Sta._____

Local time_____

Behind the Story with Marvin Miller, famous as "The Coronet Story Teller". The dramatic realism and full human interest value of the stories behind the story are fully realized by the addition of sound effects and Marvin Miller's ability to portray many characters.

Wednesday

FAMILY THEATER (J-S-A)

9:30 - 10:00 p. m. MBS Sta._____

Local time_____

Social and spiritual problems form the basis for the plots of this dramatic series, developed through the cooperation of leading actors, writers, directors and executives of the motion pictures and radio industry.

OKLAHOMA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (S-A)

10:30 - 11:00 p. m. MBS Sta._____

Local time_____

The Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra is conducted by Victor Allesandro. This marks the first time that Okla. Symphony Orchestra,

¹Principal of the Oriole Park School, Chicago, Ill., and a member of the Council's Committee on Radio.

²All hours are EST. Check your newspaper for local outlets and time. Space has been provided for inserting this information. Grade levels have been recommended by the committee: E (elementary), J (junior high), S (senior high), A (adult). Networks include ABC (American Broadcasting Company), CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), MBS (Mutual Broadcasting System), and NBC (National Broadcasting Company).

which comprises 85 of the Southwest's outstanding musicians, has ever had a coast-to-coast series of its own. The programs will be broadcast from the Municipal Auditorium, in Oklahoma City.

Friday

THE U. N. IS MY BEAT (S-A)

7:30 - 7:45 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Clark Eichelberger and guests.

PRO AND CON (S-A)

10:45 - 11:00 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Government spokesmen and distinguished American leaders present their views.

Saturday

FRED WARING SHOW (J-S-A)

10:00 - 10:30 a. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians, orchestra, songs and talk.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS (S-A)

12:15 - 12:30 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Representatives of national organizations state their views through a well-planned format prepared in advance of the broadcast.

LET'S PRETEND (E)

11:05 - 11:30 a. m. CBS Sta._____

Local time_____

Dramatic adaptations of fairy tales and original fantasies by Nila Mack. Also directed by Miss Mack.

SYMPHONIES FOR YOUTH (J-S-A)

1:30 - 2:30 p. m. MBS Sta._____

Local time_____

This series presents the 90-piece Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Alfred Wallenstein and is dedicated to the music-loving youth of America. Features musical compositions especially adapted for teen-age listening with an intermission quiz conducted by a distinguished Hollywood per-

sonality. Students selected from the studio audience form the quiz panel, answering questions submitted by program listeners. Brief comments by Alfred Wallenstein point out the musical themes and roles played by various musical instruments in the special arrangements.

NATIONAL FARM AND HOME HOUR (S-A)

1:00 - 1:30 p. m. NBC Sta._____

Local time_____

Pick-ups from the U. S. Department of Agriculture - interviews, guest speakers and music.

Changes

LIVING 1949—change to LIVING 1950

THIS IS EUROPE change to Sunday 10:00-10:30 p. m.

OBERLIN RADIO YOUNG ARTISTS change to Sunday 1:45-2:00 p. m.

AUTHOR MEETS THE CRITICS, change to Thursday 10:00-10:30 p. m.

SYLVAN LEVIN OPERA CONCERT change to Sunday 8:30-9:15 p. m.

LET FREEDOM RING (Tuesday) should be THIS IS OUR TOWN 10:30-10:45.

CAPITAL CLOAK ROOM changed to Friday, 10:30-11:00 p. m.

CROSS SECTION, U. S. A. changed to Saturday, 3:45 to 4:00 p. m.

Drop the Following

HOUSE OF MYSTERY

FAMILY CLOSEUP

THE ENCHANTED HOUR

CAMPUS SALUTE

Mighty currents of change sweeping every country on earth were reported and analyzed by the corps of CBS foreign correspondents flown to New York from major outposts of the world for the special "Mid-Century" round-table broadcast Sunday, January 1 (5:00-5:45 p. m., EST) over the Columbia Broadcasting System. A television counterpart of the round-

table was broadcast, with the same participants, later in the evening (10:00-10:45 P. M., EST).

Edward R. Murrow, who broadcasts nightly over CBS, was chairman. He led the correspondents in an informal discussion of the last fifty years and in an evaluation of prospective global trends in the next fifty years. Participants were Howard K. Smith, CBS European chief, who came from London especially for the broadcast; Bill Downs, from CBS Berlin; David Schoenbrun, CBS Paris; Winston Burdett, CBS Rome; Bill Costello, CBS Tokyo; Eric Sevareid, CBS Chief Washington correspondent, and Larry Lesueur, CBS United Nations correspondent.

Gentlemen of the Press, a weekly half-hour radio anthology of American newspaper reporting, during which five or six reporters from the nation's press are heard with their own graphic accounts of the "Greatest Story I Ever Covered," made its debut over the American Broadcasting Company on Tuesday, January 17, at 7:30 p. m., CST.

Newspapermen heard on the weekly *Gentlemen of the Press* broadcasts are selected by the newspapers for which they work. Their recordings, made at their local ABC station, are flown to Hollywood, origination point for the program, where they are edited and tape recorded for airing.

We Take Your Word is the title of a new language quiz which began on CBS, Sunday, January 29 (CBS, 10:30-11:30 PM, EST). Puzzling word questions from listeners are answered by a panel of experts. The elements that are brought out and defined on each word question from a listener include the meaning of the word, the derivation, origin, history, correct pronunciation, synonyms, similar words, regional differences in usage and diction, and any other fact or usage that may be pertinent. The sender of the word question is sent a prize, and the correctness of the analysis given by the panel members is arbitrated and announced by

a mysterious Voice of Authority.

Films

Encyclopaedia Britannica Films Inc., Wilmette Illinois, has released four new films.

Your Voice, 16 mm. one-reel black and white subject, may be purchased for \$45. or rented from the company's rental libraries in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, and Pasadena at \$2.50 for one to three days' use. Designed for use in junior and senior high school speech, English, and music classes, this film provides an ideal medium for explaining how the voice is produced and how its quality may be changed.

The film opens with rapid sequences on a variety of vocal sounds made by animals and humans, the latter dramatically expressing many emotions in several languages. The film then portrays and explains the four elements of voice production: respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation.

Animated drawings illustrate the processes of respiration, showing that breathing action is caused by changing the capacity of the chest cavity by the in-and-out movement of the lower ribs, and by the coordinated up-and-down movement of the diaphragm muscle. This action is shown by X-ray photography of the chest, believed to be unique in motion picture history. Next, phonation is illustrated by means of live-action photography showing the vocal chords in action. Animation again takes over to show how tone can also be modified by the resonators in the human head and how various vowel tones are formed. Articulation is illustrated by close-up photography of lip movements and animation showing the movement of such articulators as the lips, teeth, tongue, and palate. The film closes by emphasizing the possibility of improving the voice by proper exercise.

Synthetic Fibers, a one and a half reel 16mm. black and white sound film, tells a story

of the manufacture of rayon and nylon fabrics. This film may be purchased for \$63 or it may be rented at \$4. for three days from any of the EB Film libraries.

Simplicity in explaining the highly involved industrial techniques is achieved by setting the film in a laboratory where a chemist tells two boys, John and Bob, how rayon and nylon are made, moving, by means of the camera, to the industrial plants where the processes take place as the chemist describes them.

The Nurse, a 16 mm. black and white sound film, is available for purchase or rental. Its purchase price is \$45. and it may be rented for \$2.50 for one to three days' use.

This film is one of EBF's series on Community Helpers which now include such familiar figures as THE DOCTOR, THE MAILMAN, THE FIREMAN, and THE POLICEMAN. THE NURSE rounds out the series and gives attention to an important profession staffed primarily by women.

Circus Day in Our Town, a one and a half reel black and white sound film, may be purchased for \$63. from EB Films or rented from them at \$4 for one to three days' use.

This new film carries the spectator through the entire day of a traveling circus from the before-dawn unloading of the circus train to the final bows of the performers. Made as a classroom film for the primary grades where circus stories play a stimulating part in teaching children to read, this film provides realistic and exciting information and experiences for the children.

Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York City 17, has also announced four new releases.

This Is the Moon, one reel, 16 mm sound film, is available for \$40. A companion to YAF's earlier film *What Makes Day and Night*,

this film describes the physical characteristics of the moon, its relation to the sun and the earth, and its phases—all told in the simple terms appropriate for young children.

Speech: Platform Posture and Appearance, one reel, 16 mm sound film is available at \$40. Serving as a sequel to *Speech: Stage Fright and What To Do about It*, this film treats the problems of the speaker's posture and general appearance, pointing out that what the audience sees is often as important as what it hears, and giving a number of basic rules and precautions to guide the speaker in improving his posture and general appearance.

The Baby Sitter, a 15-minute sound film, may be purchased for \$48. Designed for junior-senior high school, college, and community groups, this film is the story of Mary Gibson's first evening as a baby-sitter in the Brown's home. The film presents Mary as being properly trained for her job, and follows her through the evening as she cares for two small children, from her arrival to her departure for home. As the film tells Mary's story, it points out the many things she has had to learn in preparation for taking care of the children, her method of getting acquainted with them, her discussion with the parents before they leave the house, how she feeds the children and puts them to bed, and how she carries out her general responsibilities to the home.

Friction, one-reel, 16 mm sound film is available for \$40.00. The film's story, told in an interesting combination of live photography and animation, explains what we mean by friction and what causes it. Friction is explained as a restraining force which we encounter daily in our lives. The film discusses and demonstrates the various means we use to reduce the amount of friction when its effects are harmful or undesirable, and the means we use to increase the amount of friction when its effects are desirable to us.

Filmstrips

Young America Films, 18 East 41st Street, New York City 17, has recently announced the release of three new color filmstrips for music classes under the series title, *The Musical Forest*. These new filmstrips are done in full color original art work, reproduced on Ansco color film. They were created by Louise A. Sutton, teacher of music in Sherman, Texas, under the guidance of Dr. Silvio Scionti, School of Music, North Texas State College, Denton, Texas. Presenting a delightful fantasy about a magical forest and the interesting animals who live in it, these three filmstrips tell the young student a story of how our *musical scale* might have developed, including the staff lines, notes, and bass and treble clef signs. The series is designed for all types of elementary and junior high school music groups—vocal, piano, instrument—to help teach the development of the scale, and to orient the student in the skill of reading, writing, and singing the notes. The series is divided as follows: Part One (39 frames), Part Two (37 frames), and Part Three (43 frames). The series can be purchased at \$16.50 for the complete set of three filmstrips (including Teacher's Guide and the new YAF File Box) from any YAF dealer or directly from YAF Films.

Recordings

Columbia Records Inc. has released *I Can Hear It Now*, Volume II, with CBS newscaster Edward R. Murrow as narrator. It covers the 1945-1949 period in world history and has been issued simultaneously on one Long Playing Microgroove record (ML 4261) and in an album of five conventional twelve-inch records (MM-881).

This second volume of *I Can Hear It Now* is described by Mr. Murrow as "The story of the desperate and sometimes agonizing search for peace, of the first three years of the atomic age, of the phenomenon of the unsought world leadership suddenly thrust upon the average American, and of the bizarre side shows which kept slightly bewildered citizens from losing the resilience which is the very core of their strength."

Volume II opens with V-J Day celebrations from New York, San Francisco, Washington, London, and Moscow and continues through the 1948 Presidential campaign. It contains the voices of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Thomas E. Dewey, Bernard Baruch, Clement R. Atlee, George Marshall, Walter Winchell, H. V. Kaltenborn, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt, Jawaharlal Nehru, Howard Hughes, James C. Petrillo, Marshall Tito, Andrei Y. Vishinsky, and many others.

General

The January issue of *School Life* (Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.) contains an excellent listing of selected "Motion Pictures on Democracy" prepared by Seerley Reid, Assistant Chief, Visual Aids to Education. See pages 61-63.

See and Hear (812 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago 10, Illinois) has produced an issue entirely devoted to the primary grades, entitled *Primary Grade Review*. In addition to excellent articles on the utilization of audio-visual aids, checklists are included on available films, filmstrips, and recordings.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

After misquoting Professor Walter V. Kaulfers on the teaching of grammar, the Editor of the *Scholastic Teacher* shares with us (issue of January 4, 1950) a "ditty," presumably his own creation. The reference to a "bottle" is to Kaulfers' response to a question from the audience regarding formal grammar, "No, I would not throw it out of the window. I would place it in a bottle and send it to Harvard." The "ditty" follows:

I been to the english teacher meeting up to buffalo and I hear a college professor give out the glad news that grammar ain't necessary no more don't be old fashioned he says with trying to learn children about commas simecolon periods clauses or drill 'em about verbs must agree with its subject he says drill are dull and tiresome and grammar why not bottle and sent it to Harvard which when he Kaulfers I mean wants some for an article for the english journal I suppose he ride on a train down to Cambridge and takes himself a swig.

Note: Professor Kaulfers had devoted half of his Buffalo N. C. T. E. convention address to descriptions of techniques for the improvement of language expression.



Copies of the Kent State University *Bulletin* Vol. 37 No. 9, Sept. 1949, a report of the 1949 Reading Conference, may be ordered from the Department of Elementary Education at Kent, Ohio. Price 50 cents.

The Fourth Annual Reading Workshop will be held at Kent July 10-14, 1950. The theme for the workshop will be "Reading in the Content Subjects." Speakers will include Guy Bond, U. of Minn.; Harold Fawcett, Ohio State; Howard Lane, NYU; Paul Witty, Northwestern;

and, Laura Zirbes, Ohio State.



Developing reading skill and reading pleasure is the purpose of a new publication, *Puzzles, Games, and Riddles*. The 32-page booklet is made up of 63 short entertainment features—word games, number squares, guessing games, crossword puzzles, rhyming riddles, nonsense teasers, and cut-out puzzles to make. Probably no better drill has been devised than the reading which demands that the child apply his ideas, that he translate what he has read into action. Copies may be ordered from Young America Magazines, 32 E. 57 Street, New York 22. Price 25 cents.



Stories, compiled by Eulale Steinmetz, is a list of stories to tell and read aloud. The book includes folk tales, heroes, festivals, and fete days. 1949. 99p. 75c. Order from the New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue and 42 Street, New York 22.



Annotated List of Books for Supplementary Reading, new 1949-50 edition, has been published recently by the Children's Reading Service of New York and is available without charge to any teacher, librarian, or principal who requests it. Exhibits of books from the catalogue are available either for a Book Week display or at the time the school library is selected. Copies of the catalogue and details about book exhibits may be obtained from the Service, 106 Beekman Street, New York 7.



"This, My Promise," a poem appearing in the February *American Junior Red Cross News*,

¹Graduate assistant, College of Education, the University of Illinois.

and "Good Morning, Good Neighbor," a song, appearing in the February issue of *American Childhood*, both written by Sema Williams Herman, are recommended to teachers who are looking for materials for democratic training with kindergarten and primary children.



Child psychologists and child experts, according to *Express Newsletter* for Jan. 9, 1950, have been busy during the last weeks reporting their findings about the child's world and his mind. Some typical reports:

Those who fail: The child who nurtures hates against weaker members of his group is usually a failure socially or emotionally and he uses his hate as a self-defense mechanism. (Dr. John Slawson, New York City)

Escapists: Children who are avid readers of comic books merely imitate their elders in escape from realism. Superman, Batman, Wonderwoman and other comic-book heroes who bend the world to their wishes give children a status they need. (Dr. Lawrence Averill, Mass. State Teachers College, Worcester)

Crude knowledge: Our present-day knowledge of the child's mind is comparable to a fifteenth-century map of the world—a mixture of truth and error, with the heads of strange sea monsters ominously rising out of the dark depths of uncharted seas. Vast areas remain to be explored. There are scattered islands of solid dependable fact, uncoordinated with unknown continents. Under the mounting influence of biologic rationalism, however, the unfinished map of the child's world is taking on more accuracy and design. (Dr. Arnold M. Gesell, Yale University)

Clues to behavior: The ways in which youngsters amuse themselves offer clues to what they are thinking and feeling, what their opinions are of themselves, their friends, their mothers and fathers and the other adults.

Listening to children at play we sometimes get the echo of what we have done around the house. Little girls berating an imaginary husband, boys pretending to lock a baby in a closet, are telling a lot about conduct they have observed somewhere. (Jean Schick Grossman, Play Schools Association, New York City)

Forcing the handicapped: It seems stupid to pass laws forcing handicapped children to go to school, to send truant officers after them when they are absent, and to flunk them out when they fail in their lessons, or spend funds to have them repeat grades, if, at the same time, we do little or nothing to help them with their problems.

We don't behave that way when we pass laws requiring men to serve in our armed forces. We make sure that they are able to do what the law requires. We ought to be even more scrupulous with young children. (Dr. Leona Baumgartner, U. S. Children's Bureau)

The habit of habits: The most important habit for children to form today is the habit of being able to form an appropriate new habit quickly. Parents must understand that today's children are not the same youngsters their parents were, nor will they grow into the adults their parents are. Boys and girls who will live in tomorrow's "unknown world" must have as early as possible as wide a range of experience as their parents can provide. They must learn early that when things are "different" they are not necessarily "bad." (Dr. Margaret Mead)

The toll for the future: Three children in every average classroom of 30 pupils are destined to spend part of their lives in a mental hospital. These are the children who now suffer from serious emotional and behavior problems and for whom few mental services are available in most communities. (John L. Thurston, Acting Federal Security Administrator)



A recent monograph by Dr. Millie C. Almy of the University of Cincinnati (Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, 1949) shows that those children who make the greatest progress toward learning to read in the first grade are those who are most interested in books, magazines, signs, and labels before they enter school.



The Educators Guide to Free Slide Films is available without cost to those interested in using sound or silent slide films in their classrooms. Write Educators Progress Service, Randolph, Wis.



A 1950 catalogue of test and guidance material may be obtained on request from Science Research Associates, 228 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 4. Over 40 separate tests including measures of intelligence, interest, emotional adjustment, scholastic achievement, specific aptitude, and occupational proficiency are listed. Included also are details of booklets in the Life Adjustment Series, reading improvement materials, learning aids, and professional publications for those in test and guidance fields.



The USA—Its Land, Its People, Its Industries is among the items free to teachers at State Teachers Magazines, Inc., 307 N. Michigan, Chicago 1. This 98-page booklet is a reprint of a new article on the United States appearing in the current edition of Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia. The booklet is illustrated in black and white, full colors, and kodachrome. Copies are limited one to a teacher.



The NEA *News* reports on a recent Gallup poll which reveals that the greatest mistake in the lives of many people is the failure to get enough education. Among those polled this was listed as the cause of their present hardship

more than any other single item. Men gave as the second reason for failure the wrong choice of a career. Women said that mistakes relating to marriage ranked next below insufficient education as a trouble source.



The story of the efforts and achievements of the United Nations since its birth four years ago is told in the 36-page booklet *Building for Peace*, published by the United Nations Department of Public Information. Copies are twenty-five cents from UN headquarters.



The January 1950 issue of *Seventeen* will be the second annual education edition of the magazine. The general theme of the issue is "Your School and You." Three types of schools were named and described as schools of the year of 1950: "Community School" in Orchard, N. Y.; "Rural School," a consolidated school of 250 students, in Floodwood, Minn.; "Vocational School" in Evanston, Ill. Free copies of the magazine are available to teachers who are interested in this series. Write to *Seventeen*, 11 West 42 Street, New York 18.



Bridges Between the School and the Community, recently published by the Board of Education of the City of New York, reviews some of the accepted practices in the field of community-school relations. The bulletin also shows how the practices are being implemented by the New York City junior high schools. That schools must take the initiative in bridging the gap between school and community is implicit throughout the bulletin. The tasks lie before educators of completing the changing concept of the function of the school, and of seeing that the child is truly educated by his total environment. Inquiries about the bulletin should be addressed to the Board at 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn 2.



Improving human relations in the neighborhood is the concern of *Building Today for Tomorrow in Our Neighborhoods*, by Gertrude Hart Day. This 72-page booklet describes successful experiences of the New Haven (Conn.) Neighborhood Experiment. Copies are obtainable from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 16.



Improving Human Relations, an anthology for the use of teachers and educational leaders, was published in November 1949 as a Bulletin of the National Council for the Social Studies of the NEA. The articles, from *Social Education* and the Sixteen Yearbook of the Council, cover the philosophy and research in this area, reports of classroom teachers who have been successful in bringing to their pupils the principles of democratic life, and, descriptions of total school programs where the principles and habits have been made a part of the life of the school.



The latest Public Affairs Pamphlet (No. 155) is *Mental Health is a Family Affair* by Dallas Pratt, M.D. and Jack Neher. The pamphlet discusses personality problems in families, how communities are helping families to prevent these problems, and individual aids that may be used in family mental health problems. Address inquiries to the Public Affairs Committee, 22 East 38 Street, New York 16. Price twenty cents.



The National Book Award, the first official recognition by the book industry of its most distinguished books of the past year, will be inaugurated when the awards for 1949 are presented on March 16, 1950 by the National Book Award Committee, which is composed of representatives of the American Book Council, the American Booksellers Association, and the Book Manufacturers Institute. The awards will be given annually to the most distinguished

works of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry written by Americans and published in this country. The names of the judges for the first award will be announced shortly.

There have been many book awards in the past, most of them sponsored by individual groups, but never has the entire book industry organized to give official recognition to American life and culture during a given year.



For teachers who are writing textbooks, the Exposition Press, 253 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, has issued a free, 32-page, illustrated booklet which discusses the problems of publishing from both the writer's and publisher's viewpoints. The booklet also outlines the opportunities and difficulties faced by new writers in securing publication of their works in all fields of literary endeavor as well as in the academic field. Copies may be had upon request.



The Journal of Teacher Education, a new quarterly devoted to both the pre-service and in-service interests of teacher education, will be started by the NEA National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards on March 1. The need for such a publication was found after several years study by the Commission.

Yearly subscription rates are \$3, or \$1 per issue. Write to the Commission at NEA headquarters, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington 6.



Democracy Demands It, (Harper), is a resource unit for intercultural education by William Van Til, John J. DeBoer, R. Will Burnett, and Kathleen Coyle Ogden. Designed primarily for high schools, the book contains much that could be helpful to elementary teachers who are or wish to do work in this area of social relationships. The 113-page book

(Continued on Page 204)

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Review and Criticism

[Brief reviews in this issue are by Ralph Thompson, Ivah Green, Elizabeth Guilfoile, Jean Gardiner Smith, Celia Burns Stendler, Hannah M. Lindahl, and Audrey F. Carpenter.]

For Early Adolescents

Rose Bowl All-American. By C. Paul Jackson, Crowell.

Here is an exciting football story that traces the Michigan team through a difficult season to final triumph in the Rose Bowl. More important to the story is the contest in human relations centered in Dick Thornley, who finds that to win over his attitude toward Bart Jensen, another team member, is a more difficult task than winning over Southern California in the Bowl. This story will find avid readers especially among pre-adolescent and adolescent boys who are sports-minded. With the exception of a few passages, the reading should not be too difficult. R.T.

Make it and Ride it. By C. J. Maginley. Illustrated by Elisabeth D. McKee. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.00

For boys (and men) who like to make "things that run" here is a book that should satisfy their every wish. Complete, concise directions with diagrams explain each step in the making of tractors, jeeps, bike trailers, racers, and the like. Kiddie cars, rocking horses, and strollers are included in the gift toys section. A list of needed hand tools is given. Scrap woods are recommended as materials. I.G.

Escape to Danger. By Edward Buell Hungerford. Wilcox and Follett, \$2.50.

This historical novel concerns itself with some of the episodes in the career of John Paul Jones, especially emphasizing the battle between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the British *Serapis*. Told through the adventures

of Nat Huntley, a sixteen-year-old American who escapes from Mill Prison in England to join the famous sea captain, it portrays with considerable realism the courage of sea warfare. The courage and suffering of the men as they face fire, shot, sinking, face-to-face combat and death is a mixture capable of producing in the reader both excitement and revulsion. Although the story may interest average readers in grades seven to twelve, it is still to be wondered if the kind of heroism and patriotism depicted in it have not already been unduly emphasized in our traditional school program. R.T.

Gridiron Courage. By Everett E. Alton. Wilcox and Follett, \$2.50.

The experiences of Sandy Morrison as football coach of a small college may prove interesting to students in the junior and senior high schools who are interested in athletics. Tied into the story are the problems of team morale and its dependence upon sportsmanship and good interpersonal relations. The football plays and strategy in the story might be classified as "first-string," but the expositions of human reactions are only "second-string," usually leaning heavily upon stereotyped behaviors and trite descriptions of them. R.T.

Low Countries. By Cornelia Spencer. Illustrated by Rafello Busoni. Holiday House, \$1.25, Reinforced cloth edition. \$1.75.

One of an extensive social studies series, this brief, charmingly illustrated volume presents several facets of the story of the three tiny countries, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxemburg. Through the historical background presented, the reader comes rather to admire the courage and resourcefulness of the people of these countries than to pity the tragic insecurity of their geographical and political sit-

uation. The highly condensed nature of this material makes it appropriate for supplementary study rather than for general reading. It is probably most usable from the sixth through the ninth grade.

E.G.

For the Middle Grades

The Magic Firecrackers. By Mitchell Dawson. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Viking press, \$2.50.

When Uncle Dick arrived from China with his magic firecrackers, the boys found a way to make wishes come true. But when they asked to be invisible, to be the best athletes in the world, or to breathe fire or know what people were thinking, they found that the answer to a wish is not always what you want. A book to delight boys who want imaginative tales that aren't sissy. There is just the right blend of humor, fantasy and reality to make the reader sure this not only could happen, but it DID!

J. G. S.

Backseat Driver. By Mabel L. Robinson, Random House.

The most delightful nonsense since Dr. Doolittle is this story of Riley, the wire-haired terrier, "who had driven the doctor's car all his life." Riley might have been cured of his proclivities when he became owner and driver (with the help of two loops attached to the steering wheel) of a miniature care of his own, but he wasn't. He still found when he returned to the mattress seat on which he sat up high beside the doctor that "somebody had to watch the road for the doctor never looked at it."

While children of all ages and grownups likewise will enjoy this tale, it is perhaps best placed at about the 10 to 12 year level.

E.G.

Mystery at Boulder Point. By Eleanore M. Jewett. Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum. Viking, \$2.50.

Marty, Michael, and blind Kathleen investigate "spooky" sights, sounds, and smells

near a haunted cottage on the seacoast. Their activities revolve around the legend of a "mooncussor" who lured sailing ships to destruction. A swiftly-moving mystery tale that will hold the attention of middle-grade readers. I.G.

The First Book of Horses. By McLennan Meekin. Illustrated by Pers Crowell. Franklin Watts, \$1.50.

A good beginning knowledge of horses is found in this book. Youngsters who own horses, and those who wish they did, will discover much of interest here. Told in a simple, casual style and combined with many pictures, a chart identifying the parts of a horse, along with a glossary of terms.

The book begins with a slight story of Cal and his cow-pony Tex, describes the training of horses on a ranch, goes into lessons in riding for boys and girls, and from there into a discussion of kinds of horses, their work and how man has used them in the past. Some historic horses are cited, and the book ends with a page of little known facts about the horse.

Print is large; illustrations, both in color and in black and white, are spirited and direct in their appeal. This book should catch the eye of intermediate children. A.F.C.

Stefanie Was the Good One. By Ara Jennings Gebaroff. Illustrated by Frank Fickle. The Caxton Printers, \$2.50.

Boys and girls in the middle grades will be interested in this simple narrative of two Polish children, Stefanie and Stanislaw, who long to be accepted as Americans by their classmates. Through the wise and sympathetic guidance of an understanding teacher, the children at school come to realize that when the parents of Stefanie and Stanislaw chose America for their home, they demonstrated their love for this country.

As children read this book, they will vicariously experience the poignant emotions of

Stefanie and Stanislaw. Better intercultural relationships will be promoted through this experience.

H.M.L.

Frederic Chopin, Son of Poland; Later Years.
By Opal Wheeler Illustrated by Christine Price. Dutton, \$2.75.

Highly dramatic and overly simplified and sentimental, the book will still have a use in giving young people a first acquaintance with the adult years of the great composer. J.G.S.

Babar's Picnic. By Laurent de Brunhoff. Illustrated by the Author. Random House, \$3.50.

This deluxe edition of a perennial favorite of Babar fans is truly magnificent. Told with de Brunhoff's usual attention to detail, it is a story which centers around the adventures of Babar's children this time, rather than the old gentleman himself. Pom, Flora and Alexander, together with Arthur and Zephir, go on a picnic, get tangled with savages, are caught in a flood, almost lost Arthur by drowning, but show their usual skill in meeting all catastrophes successfully, and as always come out on top. The book is larger than the regular edition size, and the many full page illustrations are cleverly and spectacularly done. C.B.S.

Goldie and Yellowhammer. By Lincoln Fay Robinson. Viking, \$1.50.

This is a delightful story of the peculiar affiliation of a cat and a hen with one another. Goldie, the hen, was not permitted to sit on her eggs, and so she worked out her maternal instincts on Yellowhammer, an orphan kitten. Cocklecrow, the rooster, however, became jealous of their friendship and in a terrible barnyard fight drove Yellowhammer away. Goldie joined him in exile, laid her eggs in the bushes, and soon the hen and kitten were taking turns sitting on the eggs. There is more drama when Cocklecrow discovers Goldie and Yellowhammer together, with a fitting conclusion to this exciting tale. C.B.S.

Foxie. By Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday, \$2.00.

The d'Aulaire's have told the story of Foxie with such sincerity that it reads like a true story. Foxie has a master who likes to tease the dog with a bone, removing the bone before Foxie can get it. In hungry Foxie's search for the bone, he is taken in by a kind man who feeds him. The man has an animal show, and Foxie performs in the show. He is a tremendous hit and undoubtedly would have ended his days as a dog star, except that his former master is in the audience and the two are re-united. In one respect the story doesn't quite hold together. While it is a nice picture of faithfulness of a dog to an inconsiderate master, one wonders about the poor show man who, after all, befriended Foxie in his hour of need.

C.B.S.

For Younger Children

The Wonderful House-Boat-Train. By Ruth Stiles Gannett. Illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg. Random House, \$2.00.

When Pop-pops had to retire from his job as engineer, he and his four grandchildren set out to find a home in the country. They had some very strenuous adventures before they finally settled down, adventures that all little boys and girls who love trains and boats will enjoy reading. Best suited to ages 5-8. E.G.

Cats and How to Draw Them. By Amy Hoogboom. Vanguard, \$1.50.

Large and heavy black type carries the paragraphs that describe the characteristics of nine different cats. Each is accompanied by a full page photograph which is analyzed on the succeeding pages in terms of ovals, lines and curves, with explicit directions "1, 2 and 3" for drawing. Most artists feel that any system of "how to draw" is not good in that it discourages the creative touch. Certainly this book has little to recommend it for children's use.

A.F.C.

(Continued from Page 200)

shows four different ways of starting a unit of work, tells where and how to get various teaching aids including films, displays and recordings, gives detailed guidance and lists of resources for a variety of learning experiences, includes a list of literature for further study and helpful advice, and describes class work units that help develop good intercultural attitudes and build democratic human relations. Paper, \$1.00; cloth, \$1.50.

operate with the laboratory by sending staff members and research teams. In its training and research programs the laboratory uses such methods as group analysis, clinics, mass participation, role playing, information sessions, individual consultations, demonstrations, and observer techniques. Requests for further information should be sent to the NEA Laboratory in Group Development, Division of Adult Education Services, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington 6.



The National Training Laboratory in Group Development will begin its fourth summer's activities at Gould Academy, Bethel, Maine. Sponsored by the Division of Adult Education Services of the NEA and the Research Center for Group Dynamics at the University of Michigan, the laboratory will continue through July 14. A number of universities will co-



The January issue of *Progressive Education* is devoted to "The Child." Articles included in the issue discuss research in child growth and development, attitudes as revealed behavior as adjustment to problems, and movements in the school which run counter to children's freedom.



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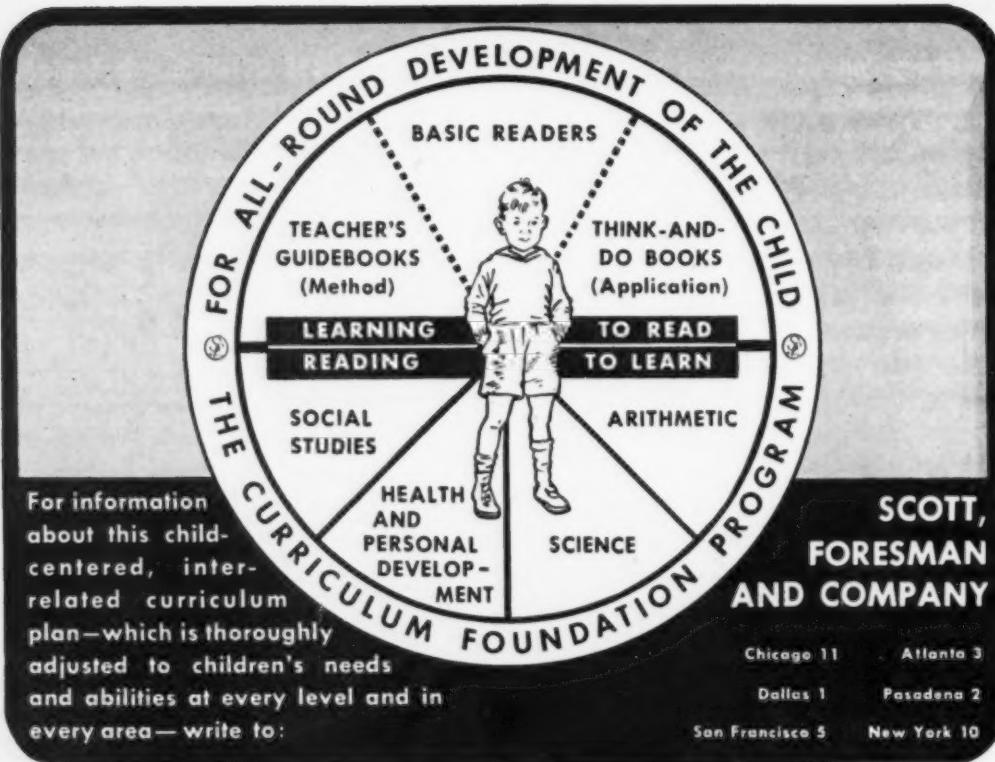
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